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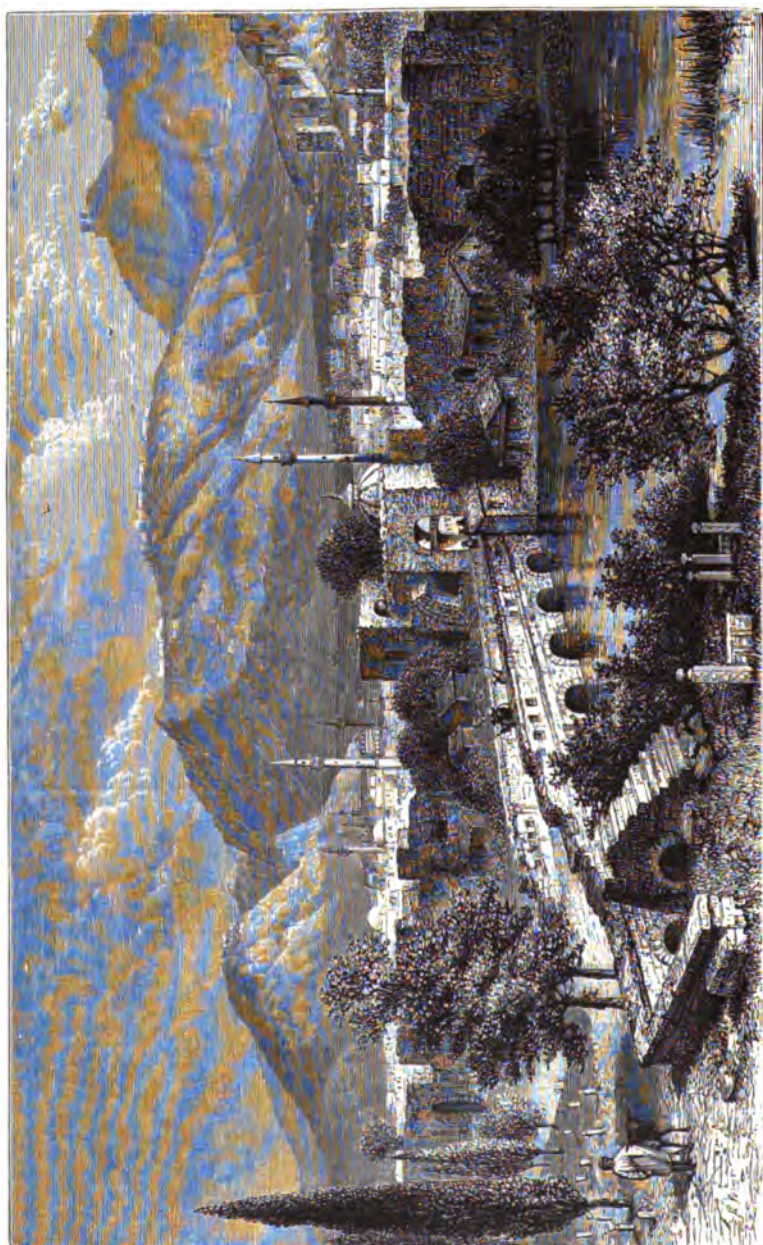












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ANTIOCH.

POPULAR COURSE

# THE NEW TESTAMENT

OF THE  
CHRISTIAN GOSPEL

OF THE GOSPEL

OF THE

OF THE GOSPEL

OF THE GOSPEL

VOLUME

Part of the New Testament

NEW YORK

CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS

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1893



A  
POPULAR COMMENTARY  
ON  
THE NEW TESTAMENT.

BY ENGLISH AND AMERICAN SCHOLARS OF VARIOUS  
EVANGELICAL DENOMINATIONS.

*WITH ILLUSTRATIONS AND MAPS.*

EDITED BY

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VOL. II.

*The Gospel of John and The Acts.*

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## INTRODUCTION TO THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN.

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IT is obviously impossible, within the limits to which we must here confine ourselves, to treat with adequate fulness the many important and difficult questions relating to the Gospel of John; nor can we attempt to do more than indicate the leading points of inquiry, together with the grounds upon which we may rest in the confident assurance that that Gospel is really the production of 'the disciple whom Jesus loved.' In endeavouring to do this, we shall approach the subject from its positive rather than its negative side, not dealing directly in the first instance with difficulties, but tracing the history of the Gospel downwards from the time when it was composed to the date at which it enjoyed the unquestioning recognition of the universal Church. Afterwards, turning to the contents of the Gospel, we shall speak of the purpose which its author had in view, and of the general characteristics of the method pursued by him in order to attain it. Such a mode of treatment seems best adapted to the object of an Introduction like the present. It will be as little as possible polemical; it will enable us to meet by anticipation most, certainly the most formidable, of the objections made to the authenticity of the Gospel; and it will put the reader in possession of those considerations as to its general character without which he cannot hope to understand it.

At the close of the Gospel (chap. xxi. 24) we read, 'This is the disciple which beareth witness of these things, and wrote these things.' These words (which are in all probability from the pen of John; see the Commentary) contain a distinct intimation on the part of the writer (comp. ver. 20) that he was 'the disciple whom Jesus loved;' and although that disciple is nowhere expressly named, we shall hereafter see that the Gospel itself leaves no room for doubt that he was the Apostle John.

I. *Personality of the Writer.*—This Apostle was the son of Zebedee and Salome, and younger, as there seems every reason to think, than his brother James. Of Zebedee we know little. He was a fisherman upon the Sea of Galilee, who pursued his occupation in common with his sons, and who continued it even after they had obeyed the summons of their Lord to follow Him (Matt. iv. 21). Of Salome we fortunately know more. From John xix. 25 it would seem probable that she was a sister of the Virgin Mary (see the Commentary); but the fact need not be dwelt upon at present. It would not help us to understand better the ties that bound Jesus to her son; for these depended on spiritual sympathy rather than relationship by blood (Matt. xii. 48–50). But whether this bond of kindred existed or not, Salome manifested her devotion to Jesus by constant waiting upon her Lord, and by ministering to Him of her substance (Mark xv. 40, xvi. 1). Nor can we fail to recognise her exhibition of the same spirit, mixed though it was in this instance with earthly elements, when she came



to Jesus with the request that her two sons might sit, the one at His right hand, the other at His left, in His kingdom (Matt. xx. 21). That was not an act of proud ambition, or the request would have been made in private.<sup>1</sup> The zeal of a mother for her children's highest good was there, as well as an enthusiasm, not chilled even afterwards by the events at the cross and at the tomb (Mark xv. 40, xvi. 1), for the cause of One whom she felt to be so worthy of her trust and love. The family of John does not seem to have been poor. Zebedee possessed hired servants (Mark i. 20). Salome had substance of which to minister to our Lord during His life (Mark xv. 40; comp. Luke viii. 3), and with which to procure the materials for embalming Him after His death (Mark xvi. 1). John was acquainted with the high priest (John xviii. 15),—a fact at least harmonizing well with the idea that he did not belong to the lowest rank of the people; and at one time of his life, whatever may have been the case at other times, he possessed property of his own (John xix. 27).

It was in circumstances such as these that John received his training in the faith of his fathers; and, as that receptivity which in after life formed one of the most marked features of his character must have shown itself in the child and in the boy, we cannot doubt that, from his earliest years, he would imbibe in a greater than ordinary degree the sublime recollections and aspirations of Israel. We know, indeed, from his ready reference upon one occasion to the fire which the prophet Elijah commanded to come down from heaven, that the sterner histories of the Old Testament had taken deep possession of his mind; while his enthusiastic expectations of the coming glory of his people equally reveal themselves in his connection with that request of Salome of which we have already spoken. Apart from such specific instances, however, of John's acquaintance with the Old Testament (which, did they stand alone, might not prove much), it is worthy of notice that the books of the New Testament most thoroughly pervaded by the spirit of the older dispensation are two that we owe to the son of Salome,—the Fourth Gospel and the Apocalypse. This remark is not to be confined to the latter of the two. A careful study of the former will show that it displays not only a much more intimate acquaintance with the Old Testament, but also a much larger appropriation of its spirit, than even that first Gospel by Matthew which was confessedly designed for Jewish Christians. Amidst all the acknowledged universalism of the Fourth Gospel, its thorough appreciation of the fact that the distinction between Jew and Gentile has for ever passed away, and that lofty idealism by which it is distinguished, and which lifts its author far above every limitation of the favour of God to nation or class, the book is penetrated to the core by the noblest and most enduring elements of the Jewish faith. The writer has sunk himself into all that is most characteristic of what that faith reveals in regard to God, to man, to the world, to the meaning and end of religious life. In addition to this, the figures of the Fourth Gospel are more Jewish than those of any book of the New Testament, except the Apocalypse. Its very language and style display a similar origin. No Gentile writer, either of the Apostolic or of the sub-Apostolic age, no Jewish writer even who had not long and lovingly appropriated the oracles of God given to his fathers, could have written as John has done.

These remarks have an important bearing on what is said of the apostle in Acts iv. 13. We there read that when the Sanhedrin beheld his boldness they marvelled, perceiving that he was an 'unlearned and common man;' and it has often been maintained that one to whom this description is applicable cannot have been the author of the fourth Gospel. The true inference lies in the opposite direction. The words quoted mean only that he had not passed through the discipline of the

<sup>1</sup> Comp. Niemeyer, *Charakteristik*, p. 44.

Rabbinical schools; and certainly of such discipline the Fourth Gospel affords no trace. His education had been of a purer kind. He had grown up amidst the influences of home, of nature, of a trying occupation, of brave and manly toil. Therefore it was that, when, with an unfettered spirit, he came into contact with the great principles and germinal seeds which underlay the Old Testament dispensation,—above all, when he came into contact with the Word of Life, with Him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets had spoken, he was able to receive Him, to apprehend Him, and to present Him to the world as he did.

It is in connection with the Baptist that we first hear of John. If Salome and Elizabeth were kinswomen (see above, and comp. Luke i. 36), John would naturally become acquainted with the remarkable circumstances attending the birth and training of the Baptist. At all events, the stern teaching of the prophet, his loud awakening calls which rang from the wilderness of Judea and penetrated to the whole surrounding country and to all classes of its society, his glorious proclamation that the long waited for kingdom was at hand, must have at once kindled into a flame thoughts long nourished in secret. John became one of his disciples (John i. 35), and the impression produced upon him by the Baptist was peculiarly deep. More truly than any of the earlier Evangelists he apprehends the evangelical ends to which, amidst all its sternness, the Baptist's mission really pointed. If the three bring before us with greater force the prophet of repentance reproving the sins of Israel, he on the other hand shows in a clearer light the forerunner of Jesus in his immediate relation to his Lord, and in his apprehension of the spiritual power and glory of His coming (comp. John i. 26, 27, iii. 29, 30, with Matt. iii. 11, 12; Mark i. 7, 8; Luke iii. 15-17).

The Baptist was the first to direct his disciple to Jesus (chap. i. 36). In company with Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, he immediately followed Him, inquired of Him where He stayed, accompanied Him to His house, and remained with Him that day. What the subject of conversation was we are not informed, but the divine Sower had scattered His seed in the young ingenuous heart; and when shortly afterwards Jesus called him to the apostleship he immediately obeyed the summons (Matt. iv. 21, 22). From this time onward to the close of his Master's earthly career John was His constant follower, entering we cannot doubt into a closer union of spirit with Him than was attained by any other disciple. Not only was he one of the chosen three who were present at the raising of the daughter of Jairus, at the Transfiguration, and at the agony in Gethsemane (Luke viii. 51, ix. 28; Mark xiv. 33); even of that small election he was, to use the language of the fathers, the most elect. He leaned upon the breast of Jesus at the Last Supper, not accidentally,—but as the disciple whom He loved (John xiii. 23); he pressed after Him into the court of Caiaphas at His trial (chap. xviii. 15); he alone seems to have accompanied Him to Calvary (chap. xix. 26); to him Jesus committed the care of His mother at the cross (chap. xix. 26, 27); he was the first on the Resurrection morning, after hearing the tidings of Mary Magdalene, to reach the sepulchre (chap. xx. 4); and, when Jesus appeared after His Resurrection to the disciples by the Sea of Galilee, he first recognised the Lord (chap. xxi. 7).

Little is related of John in the earlier Gospels. The chief incidents, in addition to those already mentioned, are his coming to Jesus and saying, 'Master, we saw one casting out devils in Thy name; and we forbade him, because he followeth not with us' (Luke ix. 49), and his receiving from Jesus, along with his brother James, the title of 'Son of Thunder' (Mark iii. 17),—a title given to denote not any possession of startling eloquence, but the power and vehemence of his character. It has indeed been urged by foes, and even admitted by friends, that such is not the character of the Apostle as it appears in the Fourth Gospel. But this is a superficial view. No doubt

in chaps. xiii.-xvii., when the conflict is over and Jesus is alone with His disciples, we breathe the atmosphere of nothing but the most perfect love and peace. The other chapters of the Gospel, however, both before and after these, leave a different impression upon the mind. The 'Son of Thunder' appears in every incident, in every discourse which he records. To draw a contrast between the fire of youth as it appears in the John of the first three Evangelists and the mellowed gentleness of old age in the John of the fourth is altogether misleading. The vehement, keen, impetuous temperament is not less observable in the latter than in the former. We seem to trace at every step, while the conflict of Jesus with His enemies is described, the burning zeal of one who would call down fire from heaven upon the guilty 'Jews.'

The continued possession of the same character is at least entirely consistent with what is told us of John in the Acts of the Apostles; and it bursts forth again in all its early ardour in the traditions of the Church. John was present with Peter at the healing of the lame man (Acts iii. 1-11), and, although the address of the latter is alone recorded, he does not seem to have been silent on the occasion (chap. iv. 1). He exhibited the same boldness as his fellow-apostle in the presence of the Council (chap. iv. 13); joined him in the expression of his determination to speak what he had seen and heard (chap. iv. 19, 20); was probably at a later point committed with him to prison (chap. v. 18), and miraculously delivered (chap. v. 19); was brought again before the Sanhedrin (chap. v. 27), and, through the influence of Gamaliel, once more set free to resume his labours (chap. v. 41, 42). After Samaria had been evangelized by Philip, he was sent to that city with Peter that they might complete the work begun (chap. viii. 14-17); and, this mission accomplished, he returned with him to Jerusalem, preaching the gospel at the same time in many villages of the Samaritans (chap. viii. 25). From this time we hear nothing of him until the first great Council at Jerusalem (Acts xv.; Gal. ii.). Then Paul found him in the holy city, regarded by the Christian community as one of the 'pillars' of the Church,—a circumstance which, combined with Paul's private explanations to those so named (Gal. ii. 2, 9), may justly lead to the inference that he still belonged to that portion of the Christian community which had not risen to the full conception of the independence and freedom of the Christian faith.

Scripture says nothing more of John's apostolic labours. It was now A.D. 50; and we have no further information regarding him until he appears, in the traditions of the Church, as Bishop of Ephesus in the latter part of the first century. An attempt has indeed been recently made to cast doubt on John's residence at Ephesus, but there are few points in the history of early Christianity upon which tradition is so unanimous, and there need be no hesitation in accepting the statement. We do not know the exact date at which he went to this city. It can hardly have been during the life of Paul, or that Apostle would not, in accordance with his own principles of action, have connected himself so closely with the district (Rom. xv. 20; 2 Cor. x. 16). The probability is that, deeply attached to Jerusalem, clinging to the memories associated with the labours and death of Jesus, he lingered in the sacred city until its destruction approached. Then he may have wandered forth from a place upon which the judgment of God had set its seal, and found his way to Ephesus. The traditions of the Church regarding him while he continued there possess singular interest, partly from the light thrown by them upon the times, partly from the touching pathos by which some of them are marked, mainly because they enable us so thoroughly to identify the aged Apostle with the youthful follower of Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels. Such is the story of his meeting with Cerinthus. It is said that the Apostle once entered the bath-house at Ephesus, and, discovering Cerinthus the heretic within, sprang

forth exclaiming, 'Let us flee, lest even the bath-house fall in, since there is within it Cerinthus, the enemy of the truth.' Such also is the story of John and the young robber, one of the most beautiful stories of Christian antiquity, which we have no room to relate; and such the tradition that the Apostle, when too old to walk, was carried by his disciples into the midst of the congregation at Ephesus, only to repeat over and over again to his fellow-believers, 'Little children, love one another.' Other stories are told of him which may be omitted as less characteristic than these; but the general impression left by them all is not only that the early Church possessed a remarkably distinct conception of the personality of the apostle, but that its conception corresponded in the closest manner to the mingled vehemence and tenderness which come out so strongly in the picture of him presented by the earlier Gospels and by his own writings. From Ephesus, according to a tolerably unanimous, if rather indefinite tradition, which seems to be confirmed by Rev. i. 9, John was banished for a time to the island of Patmos, a wretched rock in the Ægean Sea, but was afterwards permitted to return to the scene of his labours in Ephesus. It was under Nerva, it is said, that his return took place (A.D. 96-98), although he is also spoken of as having been alive after the accession of Trajan (A.D. 98). The days of the aged Apostle were now, however, drawing to a close. The companions of his earlier years, those whose eyes had seen and whose ears had heard Him who was the Word of Life, had been long since gathered to their rest. His time, too, was come. He had waited for more than threescore years to rejoin the Master whom he loved. He died and was buried at Ephesus; and with him closes the apostolic age.

II. *Authorship of the Gospel.*—It is the almost unanimous tradition of the Church that the Apostle John wrote this Gospel. Our earliest authorities for the fact are Theophilus of Antioch (A.D. 175), Irenæus (A.D. 130-200), the Muratorian Fragment (A.D. 170-180), and Clement of Alexandria (A.D. 160-220). The accounts of these writers differ slightly from each other, but all agree in distinctly attributing our present Gospel to John; while the fourth, who is clearly independent of the other three, draws a remarkable distinction between it and the earlier Gospels, the latter being spoken of as containing 'the bodily things,' the former as 'a spiritual Gospel.' To the distinction thus drawn we shall presently return.

If, as the above-mentioned authorities lead us to infer, the Fourth Gospel was made public towards the close of the first century (and it is unnecessary to discuss here the question of an interval between the writing and the publication), we naturally look for quotations from or allusions to it in the writings that have come down to us from the period immediately following that date. These prove fewer than we might expect. Not indeed that they are wholly wanting. The acknowledged Epistles of Ignatius and the 'Shepherd' of Hermas, belonging respectively to the first twenty and the first forty years of the second century, exhibit a style of thought, sometimes even of language, closely connected with that of the Gospel. The Epistle of Polycarp to the Philippians, again, a little later than the 'Shepherd,' and the writings of Papias before the middle of the second century, in bearing witness to the first Epistle as the work of John, lead us directly to the same conclusion in regard to the Gospel, for few will doubt that the two books are from the same hand. The account of the martyrdom of Polycarp, moreover, written in the middle of the same century, is so obviously modelled upon John's narrative of the death of Jesus, that that narrative must have been in possession of the Church before the 'Martyrdom' was penned. Finally, the Epistle to Diognetus (A.D. 120), the address of Tatian to the Greeks (A.D. 160-180), the writings of Justin Martyr (A.D. 147-160), and the letter of the Churches of Vienne and Lyons (A.D. 177), all of which seem with more or less clearness to quote

from the Fourth Gospel, bring us down to the distinct statements of Theophilus, Irenæus, the Muratorian Fragment, and Clement, alluded to above, and to a date at which the testimonies to the Johannine authorship of the Gospel are as clear and full as can be desired.

The stream of allusion we have been following has flowed through the writings of the orthodox Church. But it is a remarkable fact, that allusions to our Gospel are still earlier and clearer in the heretical writings of the first half of the second century. This is especially the case with Basilides and his followers, as early as A.D. 125; and they are followed by the Valentinians, who can hardly be separated from their Master, Valentinus (A.D. 140), and by Ptolemæus and Heracleon (about A.D. 170-180), the last mentioned having even written a commentary upon the Gospel. To these facts may be added several important considerations. Thus, to quote the words of Bishop Lightfoot, 'when soon after the middle of the second century divergent readings of a striking kind occur in John's Gospel, we are led to the conclusion that the text has already a history, and that the Gospel therefore cannot have been very recent.'<sup>1</sup> Again, in the early years of the second half of the second century the Gospel formed a part of the Syriac and old Latin translations of the New Testament, and as such was read in the public assemblies of the churches of Syria and Africa. Lastly, in the Paschal Controversies (about A.D. 160) there is hardly reason to doubt that the apparent discrepancy between this and the earlier Gospels, as to the date of the Last Supper of Jesus, played no small part in the dispute by which the whole Church was rent.

All these circumstances go far towards answering the allegation often made, that the paucity of allusions to the Fourth Gospel in the first seventy or eighty years after its publication is inconsistent with its authenticity. To present them thus, however, as an argument that the Gospel is authentic is not only greatly to understate the case; it is even to put the reader upon a wrong track for arriving at a positive conclusion. The real ground of conviction is the consistent belief of the Church. It is not for those who accept the Gospel to account for its admission into the canon of the last quarter of the second century, on the supposition that it is true; it is for those who reject it to account for this, on the supposition that it is false. The early Church was not a mass of individual units believing in Jesus, each in his own way nourishing in secrecy and independence his own form of faith. It was an organized community, conscious of a common foundation, a common faith, and common ordinances of spiritual nourishment for all persons in all lands who held the one Head, Christ Jesus. It was a body, every one of whose members sympathized with the other members: to every one of them the welfare of the whole was dear, and was moreover the most powerful earthly means of securing his own spiritual progress. The various generations of the Church overlapped one another; her various parts were united by the most loving relation and the most active intercourse; and all together guarded the common faith with a keenness of interest which has not been surpassed in any subsequent age of the Church's history. Even if we had not one probable reference to the Fourth Gospel previous to A.D. 170, we should be entitled to ask with hardly less confidence than we may ask now, How did this book find its way into the canon as the Gospel of John? How is it that the moment we hear of it we hear of it everywhere, in France, Italy, North Africa, Egypt, Syria? No sooner do the sacred documents of any local church come to light than the Fourth Gospel is among them, is publicly read in the congregations of the faithful, is used as a means for nourishing the spiritual life, is quoted in controversies of doctrine, is referred to in disputes as

<sup>1</sup> *On a Fresh Revision of the New Testament*, p. 20.

to practice. It is simply an impossibility that this could have taken place within ten or twenty or thirty years after some single congregation of the widespread Church had accepted it from the hands of an unknown individual as (whether claiming to be so or not) the production of John the Apostle. In the controversies of later years it seems to us that the defenders of the Gospel have failed to do justice to their own position. They have not indeed paid too much attention to objectors, for many of these have been men of almost unrivalled learning and of a noble zeal for truth; but, by occupying themselves almost entirely with answers to objections, they have led men to regard the authenticity of the Gospel as an opinion to be more or less plausibly defended, rather than as a fact which rests upon that unvarying conviction of the Church which is the strongest of all evidence, and the falsehood of which no opponent has yet been able to demonstrate. Let the faith, the life, the controversies, the worship of the Church about A.D. 170 be first accounted for without the Fourth Gospel, and it will then be more reasonable to ask us to admit that the small number of allusions to it in the literature of the preceding part of the century is a proof that the book had at that time no existence.

Many considerations, however, may be mentioned to explain that paucity of quotation and allusion upon which so great stress is laid. We notice only two. (1) The Fourth Gospel is considerably later in date than the other three. By the time it appeared the latter were everywhere circulated and appealed to in the Church. They had come to be regarded as the authoritative exposition of the life of the Redeemer. It could not be easy for a Gospel so different from them as is the fourth at once to take a familiar place beside them in the minds of men. Writers would naturally depend upon authorities to which they had been accustomed, and to which they knew that their readers had been in the habit of deferring. (2) A still more important consideration is the character of the book itself. May there not be good reason to doubt whether the Fourth Gospel, when first issued, would not be regarded as a theological treatise on the life of Jesus rather than as a simple narrative of what He said and did? It is at least observable that when Irenæus comes to speak of it he describes it as written to oppose Cerinthus and the Nicolaitanes (*Adv. Haer.* iii. 11, 1); and that when Clement of Alexandria gives his account of its origin he describes it as 'a spiritual gospel' written in contrast with those containing 'the bodily things' (in Euseb. *H. E.* vi. 14). It may be difficult to determine the exact meaning of 'spiritual' here, but it cannot be understood to express the *divine* as contrasted with the *human* in Jesus; and it appears more natural to think that it refers to the inner spirit in its contrast with the outward facts of His life as a whole. If so, the statement seems to justify the inference that the earlier gospels had been considered the chief storehouse of information with regard to the actual events of the Saviour's history. What bears even more upon this conclusion is the manner in which Justin speaks. We have already quoted him as one of those to whom the Fourth Gospel was known, yet his description of the Saviour's method of address is founded upon the discourses in the Synoptic Gospels, quite inapplicable to those of the Fourth (*Apol.* i. 14). Phenomena such as these make it probable that the Fourth Gospel was at first regarded as a presentation of spiritual truth respecting Jesus rather than as a simple narration similar to those already existing in the Church: and if so, the paucity of references to it, until it came to be better understood, is at once explained. The suggestion now offered finds some confirmation in a fact formerly mentioned, that the Gospel was a favourite one with the early heretics. Containing the truth, as it did, in a form in some degree affected by the speculations of the time and the country of its birth, it presented a larger number of points of contact for their peculiar systems than the earlier gospels.

## xx INTRODUCTION TO THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN.

In it they found many a hint which they could easily develope and misuse. Its profoundly metaphysical character was exactly suited to their taste; and they welcomed the opportunity, as we see from the *Refutations of Hippolytus* (Clark's translation, i. p. 276), of appealing to so important and authoritative a document in favour of their own modes of thought. But this very circumstance must have operated against its quick and general reception by the Church. The tendency, if there was room for it at all, would be to doubt a writing in which systems destructive of the most essential elements of Christianity claimed to have support; and it helps to deepen our sense of the strength of the Church's conviction of the divine origin of our Gospel, that, in spite of the use thus made of it, she clung to it without the slightest hesitation and with unyielding tenacity.

In reviewing the first seventy years of the second century, a period at the end of which it must not be forgotten that the Fourth Gospel is generally and unhesitatingly acknowledged to be the work of John, we can trace no phenomena inconsistent with such a conclusion. No other theory gives an adequate explanation of the facts. Unless, therefore, the structure and contents of the Gospel can be shown to be inconsistent with this view, we are manifestly bound to accept the testimony of the early Church as worthy of our confidence. According to that testimony the Gospel was written, or at least given to the Church at Ephesus, towards the close of the apostle's life. There is nothing to determine with certainty the particular date. The probabilities are in favour of fixing it about A.D. 90.

Turning now to the internal character of the Gospel, we shall find that, if carefully examined, it is not only consistent with, but strongly confirmatory of, the Johannine authorship.

1. *The author was unquestionably a Jew.* Some most marked peculiarities of the Gospel, such as its artificial arrangement and its teaching by symbolic action (points of which we have yet to speak more fully), not only are strictly Jewish, but have nothing corresponding to them in any Gentile writer of the age. Nor does this book contain one word to suggest the inference that its author, originally a Gentile, might have acquired his Jewish thoughts and style by having become, before his conversion to Christianity, a proselyte to Judaism. To such an extent do these features permeate the Gospel, that they cannot be the result of later and acquired habits of thought. They are the soul of the writing. They are interwoven in the most intimate manner with the personality of the writer. They must have grown with his growth and strengthened with his strength before he could be so entirely moulded by them. Nothing shows this more than the relation which exists in the Gospel between Christianity and Judaism. The use of the expression 'the Jews,' when properly understood, implies the very contrary of what it is so often adduced to establish. It would be simply a waste of time to argue that our Lord's conflict with 'the Jews' was not a conflict with Judaism. But, this being so, the use of the expression becomes really a measure of the writer's indignation against those who, having been appointed the guardians of a lofty faith, had dimmed, defaced, and caricatured it. Such expressions as 'A feast of the Jews,' 'The Passover of the Jews,' 'The manner of the purifying of the Jews,' 'The Jews' feast of Tabernacles,' and so on, not only could well be used by a writer of Jewish birth, but are even consistent with true admiration of the things themselves when conformed to their ideal. He has in view institutions as perverted by man, not as appointed by the Almighty. He sees them observed and urged by their defenders for the sake of their own selfish interests, made instruments of defeating the very end for which they had been originally given, used to deepen the darkness rather than to lead to the coming light. He sees that that stage in the history of a faith has been

reached when the form has so completely taken the place of the substance, the letter of the spirit, that to revivify the former is impossible : it must perish if the latter is to be saved. He sees the spirituality of religion crushed, extinguished, in the very moulds which had for a time preserved it. Therefore he might well say, Their work is done : God's plan is accomplished : they must perish. In all this there is no antagonism to true Judaism. No Gentile authorship is before us. The thought belongs to a different training and a different race ; and that, too, at a time when Judaism must have possessed much of its former interest, when the echoes of its greatness had not yet passed away.

The same thing appears in the relation of the writer to the Old Testament Scriptures. They are quoted with great frequency, and it is well worthy of notice that the quotations are not simply taken from the Septuagint. They are at times from the Hebrew where it differs from the Septuagint : at times the translation is original (comp. chaps. ii. 17, xii. 40, xix. 37, xiii. 18). Nothing leads more directly than this to the thought not only of Jewish birth, but also of long familiarity with Jewish worship in Palestine. In all the provinces at least of the Western *Diaspora* the service of the synagogue was conducted not in Hebrew but in Greek, by means of the Septuagint. To Gentiles of all conditions of life, and similarly to Jews of the Dispersion, with the exception of a very few, the Hebrew Scriptures were even in the apostolic age, and certainly at a later date, utterly unknown. To think of a Gentile Christian of the first half of the second century, whether a native of Alexandria or of Asia Minor, as able to translate for himself, is to suppose a state of things of which no other illustration can be adduced, and which is at variance with all our knowledge of the time.

The same conclusion is to be deduced from the Hebraic style of the book. This character of its style is now generally recognised. But the fact is of such interest and importance, yet at the same time so dependent upon a skilled and delicate acquaintance with both Hebrew and Greek, that instead of quoting examples which the English reader would hardly understand, we shall refer to two, out of many, statements from writers whose authority on such a point none will question. It is thus that Keim speaks : 'The style of the book is a remarkable combination of a facility and skill essentially Greek, with a form of expression that is truly Hebrew in its complete simplicity, childlikeness, picturesqueness, and in some sense guilelessness.'<sup>1</sup> To a similar effect Ewald : 'It is well worthy of our observation that the Greek language of our author bears the clearest and strongest marks of a genuine Hebrew who, born among Jews in the Holy Land, and having grown up among them, had learned the Greek language in later life, but still exhibits in the midst of it the whole spirit and air of his mother tongue. He has constructed a Greek tongue to which nothing corresponds in the other writings that have come down to us marked by a Hellenistic tinge.'<sup>2</sup>

2. *The author belonged to Palestine.* He is alive to all the geographical, ecclesiastical, and political relations of the land. He speaks of its provinces—Judea, Samaria, and Galilee. He is familiar with its towns—Jerusalem, Bethany, Sychar, Cana, Nazareth, Capernaum, Bethsaida, Tiberias, Ephraim ; and not less so with its river Jordan and its winter-torrent Kedron. The general character of the country is known to him, the different routes from Judea into Galilee (chap. iv. 4), the breadth of the sea of Galilee (chap. vi. 19, comp. Mark vi. 47), the lie of the road from Cana to Capernaum (chap. ii. 12), the exact distance between Jerusalem and Bethany (chap. xi. 18). The situation of particular spots is even fixed with great distinctness, such as of Jacob's well in chap. iv., of Bethesda in chap. v., and of Cana in chap. ii.

Similar remarks apply to his acquaintance with the ecclesiastical and political

<sup>1</sup> *Jesus von Nazara*, i. p. 157.

<sup>2</sup> *Die Johann. Schriften*, i. p. 44.



circumstances of the time. It is not possible to illustrate this by details. We add only that all his allusions to such points as we have now noticed are made, not with the laboured care of one who has mastered the subject by study, but with the simplicity and ease of one to whom it is so familiar that what he says is uttered in the most incidental manner. Where did he obtain his information? Not from the Old Testament, for it is not there. Not from the earlier Gospels, for they afford but little of it. Surely not from that second century which, according to the statement of objectors, left him in the belief that appointment to the high-priesthood was an annual thing! One source of knowledge alone meets the demands of the case. The writer was not only a Jew, but a Jew of Palestine.

3. *The author was an eye-witness of what he relates.* We have his own explicit statement upon the point in chap. i. 14 and chap. xix. 35 (see the Commentary). Upon this last verse we only call attention now to the distinction, so often overlooked, between the two adjectives of the original, both translated 'true' in the Authorised Version, but wholly different in meaning. The first does not express the truth of the fact at all, but sets forth the fact as one in regard to which the witness was not, and cannot have been, mistaken: his testimony is all that testimony can be. The moment we give its due weight to this consideration, we are compelled to admit that 'he that hath seen hath borne witness, and his witness is true,' can refer to no other than the writer of the words. He could not have thus alleged of another that his testimony was thoroughly true and perfect—that it was the exact expression of the incident which had taken place. What he himself has seen is the only foundation of such a 'witness' as that which he would give.

The statements thus made are confirmed by the general nature of the work. There is a graphic power throughout the whole, a liveliness and picturesqueness of description, which constrain us to believe that we are listening to the narrative of an eye-witness. There is a delicacy in the bringing out of individual character (as in the case of Martha and Mary in chap. xi.) which even the literary art of the present day could hardly equal. And there is a minuteness of detail, different from that of the earlier Gospels, for whose presence it is altogether impossible to account unless it was suggested by the facts. If the trial before Pilate is an imaginary scene, there is nothing in all the remains of Greek antiquity to compare with it.

4. *The author, if an eye-witness and a disciple of Jesus, could be no other than the Apostle John.* We have already seen that he calls himself 'the disciple whom Jesus loved.' But from such passages as chaps. xiii. 23, xix. 26, we infer that the disciple so peculiarly favoured must have been one of those admitted to the most intimate communion with Jesus. These were only three, Peter, James, and John. One of these three, therefore, he must have been. He was not Peter, for that apostle is frequently mentioned in the Gospel by his own name, and is on several occasions expressly distinguished from 'the disciple whom Jesus loved' (chaps. xiii. 24, xxi. 7, 20). Neither was he James, for that apostle was put to death by Herod at a date long anterior to any at which our Gospel can have been composed (Acts xii. 2). He could therefore only be John.

Internal evidence thus lends its force to the external for the conclusion that we advocate. That there are no difficulties in the matter, or that they are slight, it would be foolish to allege. They are both numerous and weighty. But it seems to us that they are connected less with the actual state of the evidence, than with the fact that the true character of the Fourth Gospel has usually been overlooked by those who, in this country at least, have defended its authenticity. In this respect we owe much to the very continental scholars who have been most unfriendly to its

apostolic origin. None have contributed so greatly to unfold its true character ; and, in doing so, they have helped most powerfully, however unconsciously, to answer their own objections to the Johannine authorship. That authorship there is no reasonable ground to doubt.

III. *Object of the Gospel.*—The Gospel of John is in our hands, the production of that apostle who, of all the apostolic band, had been most closely and tenderly associated with their common Master. Why was it written ?

We have already had occasion to mention some of the early testimonies bearing upon this point. We must now refer to them again.

Eusebius quotes Clement of Alexandria as saying that ‘John, the last of the Apostles, perceiving that the bodily things (of Jesus) had been made known in the Gospels, and being at the same time urged by his friends, and borne along by the Spirit, wrote a spiritual Gospel.’ And a still earlier authority (the Muratorian Fragment) so far agrees with this as to tell us that ‘when John’s fellow-disciples and bishops exhorted him he said, Fast along with me three days from to-day, and let us relate the one to the other whatever has been revealed to us. The same night, it was revealed to Andrew the Apostle that John should in his own name write down the whole, and that they all should revise (what he wrote).’ The two accounts, while obviously independent, bear witness to the same view of the origin of our Gospel. The friends of the Apostle—how impossible that it should be otherwise !—had often heard him relate much that was not found in the Gospels already in existence. They urged him to put it in writing, and he complied with their request. In other words, the Fourth Gospel was written as a supplement to its predecessors. Up to a certain point the idea may be accepted ; but that John wrote mainly for the purpose of supplying things wanting in the Synoptic narrative is a theory inconsistent with the whole tone of his composition. His work is from first to last an original conception, distinguished from previous Gospels alike in the form and in the substance of its delineation, proceeding upon a plan of its own clearly laid down and consistently followed out, and presenting an aspect of the person and teaching of Jesus which, if not entirely new, is set before us with a fulness which really makes it so. It is one burst of sustained and deep appreciation of what its writer would unfold, the picture of one who paints not because others have failed to catch the ideal he would represent, but because his heart is full and he must speak.

On the other hand, it was the opinion of Irenæus that John wrote to controvert the errors of the Nicolaitanes and of Cerinthus ; in other words, that his aim was not so much supplementary as *polemical*. Up to a certain point, again, the idea may be accepted ; but it is impossible to believe that it affords us the whole, or even the main explanation of his work. His presentation of Jesus might no doubt be moulded by the tone of thought around him, because he had himself been moulded by it. Yet he starts from a positive, not from a controversial point of view. Filled with his subject, he is impelled to set it forth without turning aside to show, as a controversialist would have done, that it met the deficiencies or errors of his age. Upon these he makes no direct attack. It may be in the light of the present that the truth shapes itself to his mind ; yet he writes as one whose main business is not to controvert the present but to revivify the past.

Neither of these statements, then, explains the Apostle’s aim. He has himself given the explanation, and that so clearly that it is difficult to account for the differences of opinion that have been entertained. His statement is, ‘Many other signs therefore did Jesus in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book : but these are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son

of God, and that believing ye may have life in His name' (chap. xx. 30, 31). Almost every word of this statement is of the utmost importance for the point before us. But, referring for fuller exposition to the Commentary, we now only remark that John is not to be understood as meaning that the Gospel was written in order that its readers might be led to acknowledge the Divine mission of Jesus, when they beheld the works wrought by Him in more than human power. These readers were already believers, disciples, friends. What was wanted was not the first formation but the deepening of faith within them, so that they might reach a profounder appreciation of the true character of Jesus, a more intimate communion with Him and in Him with the Father, and thus also a richer and more abundant spiritual life (comp. chap. x. 10).

The conclusion now reached will be strengthened if we observe that, with a characteristically firm grasp of his materials, and with that remarkable unity of plan which distinguishes the Gospel, John manifests the same intention at the first appearance of the Redeemer in his history. In his first chapter we read of three, Andrew, Philip, and Nathanael, who, having been brought face to face with Jesus, make confession of their faith. It is impossible to overlook the parallelism between this paragraph and chap. xx. 30, 31. The three disciples bear witness to the three aspects of the Saviour brought before us in the Evangelist's own summary of his work—'Jesus,' 'the Christ,' 'the Son of God.' The similarity is an important testimony to the fact that that summary is not one for which he might have substituted another, but that it is the calm, self-possessed utterance of a writer who had from the first a clear perception of the end which he kept in view throughout.

To the question, therefore, Why did John write? we may now reply: He wrote in order to present to believing men a revelation of the Divine Son which might deepen, enlarge, perfect their faith, and which, by bringing them into closer spiritual communion with the Son, might make them also in Him spiritually sons of God. He wrote to exhibit, in the actual facts of the life of the 'Word become flesh,' the glory of that union which had been established in His person between the Divine and the human. He wrote to be a witness to the heart of One who is in His people, and in whom the Father abides (chaps. xiv. 10, xvii. 23).

IV. *Characteristics of the Gospel.*—Having thus ascertained the purpose with which the Fourth Gospel was written, we shall now be better able to appreciate some of those characteristics which have furnished opponents with many plausible objections, and have occasioned no small perplexity to friends. Of these the following seem to deserve notice, either as being in themselves the most important, or as being frequently made use of in this Commentary :—

(1.) *The selective principle upon which the evangelist proceeds.* No historian can mention all the particulars of any whole life, or even of any single event, that he records. To a certain extent he is bound to select those which, from whatever cause, strike him most or seem to bear most closely on his purpose. But the writer of the Fourth Gospel gives many proofs that he not only carries this principle to an unusual extent, but does it deliberately and on purpose. The incidents looked at as a whole will in part illustrate what we say. That these should constitute a group so different from what we have in the earlier Gospels is often urged as an objection to the authenticity of the Fourth. Those indeed who make the objection lose sight of the fact that there is selection of incidents as truly in the former as in the latter. The difference between the two cases lies less in the extent to which selection is carried, than in the degree of consciousness with which the principle is applied. In the Synoptic Gospels it is less easy to trace the hand of the writer as he puts aside what does not appear to him to bear upon his subject, or as he brings into prominence what

has direct relation to his aim. Abstaining, however, from any comparison between our two groups of authorities, and confining ourselves to the Fourth Gospel, we rather notice that the selection of its incidents in general is determined by the ideas to which expression is given in the Prologue. It is not through forgetfulness or ignorance of other incidents that the writer confines our attention to a selected few (comp. chap. xxi. 25), but through his conviction that no others will as well subserve the end that he has in view. Hence, accordingly, the space devoted to the discourses with 'the Jews,' which are not those of a mild and gentle teacher, but of one who is in conflict with bitter and determined foes, of one whose business it is to confute, to convict, and to condemn. No one, giving heed to the state of Jewish feeling at the time, can doubt that these discourses in their general strain have all the verisimilitude that outward evidence can lend to them,—that the teaching of Jesus must have been a struggle, and in precisely this direction. The conflict between light and darkness became thus to John a leading idea of the history of his Master. The thought finds expression in the Prologue (chap. i. 5-11), and the discourses which illustrate it naturally follow. It is not otherwise with the miracles. He invariably styles these 'signs,' a word in itself showing that they are outward acts expressive of a hidden meaning from which they derive their chief importance. Why, then, does he give them as he does? Because, looking over the whole manifestation of Jesus, he had been taught to find in Him the fulfilment of 'grace and truth' which had not been given in the law,—the perfect Light, the present and eternal Life, of men. He presents these ideas in the Prologue (chap. i. 4, 5, 9, 17), and the selection given of the miracles naturally follows.

The point now before us may be illustrated, not only by the incidents of the Gospel looked at thus generally, but by smaller and more minute particulars. Many of these, however, will be noticed in the Commentary (see, for example, the note on chap. ix. 6), and we shall not occupy time with them now. The point to be borne in mind by the reader is, that in the Gospel of John there is no attempt to give the historical facts of the life of Jesus in all their particulars. There is throughout conscious and intentional *selection*. From what he has seen, the writer has attained a particular idea of the Person, the Life, the Work of his Divine Master. He will present that idea to the world; and knowing that, if all the things that Jesus did were to be written down, 'the world itself would not contain the books that should be written,' he makes choice of that which will most fitly answer the appointed end.

(2.) *The symbolic method of treatment which the evangelist exhibits.* This is so peculiarly characteristic of John, and has at the same time been so much disregarded by most modern commentators, that one or two general remarks upon teaching by symbols seem to be required. The Old Testament is full of it. All the arrangements of the tabernacle, for example; its courts, the furniture of its courts, the ceremonial observances performed in it, the very dyes and colours used in the construction of its wrappings, have an appropriate meaning only when we behold in them the expression of spiritual truths relating to God and to His worship. More especially it would seem to have been a part of the *prophet's* task thus to present truth to those whom he was commissioned to instruct; and the higher the prophetic influence which moved him, the more powerful his impression of the message given him to proclaim, the more entirely he was borne along by the divine afflatus, the more did he resort to it. As simple illustrations of this we may refer to the cases of Zedekiah, Elisha, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel (1 Kings xxii. 11; 2 Kings xiii. 17; Jer. xxvii. 1-18; Ezek. iv. 1-6).

If it was thus under the Old Testament dispensation, there is not only no reason why we ought not to expect symbolism in the New Testament, but every reason to

the contrary. The narrative of Agabus shows that in the apostolic age symbolic action was still a part of the prophetic functions appreciated by the Jews (Acts xxi. 11). What wonder, then, if our Lord should teach by symbolism as well as by direct instruction? He was the fulfilment not only of Israel's priestly, but also of its prophetic line. He was the true and great Prophet in whom the idea and mission of prophecy culminated; in whom all that marked the prophet as known and honoured in Israel attained its highest development and reached perfect ripeness. Besides this, His eye saw, as no merely human eye ever did, the unity that lies at the bottom of all existence, the principles of harmony that bind together the world of nature and of man, so that the former becomes the type and shadow of the latter. When, accordingly, He appeared as the great Prophet of Israel, there is nothing unreasonable in the supposition that He would teach by symbol as well as word, that not only His words but His acts should be designed by Him to be lessons to the people, illustrations of the nature of His kingdom and His work.

Still further, we cannot forget the general character of all the words and actions of our Lord. As coming from Him, they possess a fulness of meaning which we should not have been justified in ascribing to them had they come from another teacher. It is impossible to doubt that He *saw* all the truths which find a legitimate expression in what He said or did, however various the sphere of life to which they apply. And it is equally impossible to doubt that He intended to *utter* what He saw.

But if Jesus might thus teach, a disciple and historian of His life might apprehend this characteristic of His teaching,—nay, would apprehend it, the more he entered into the spirit of his Master. There are clear indications of this, accordingly, even in the earlier Gospels. The account of the miraculous draught of fishes, at the time when Simon and Andrew were called to the apostleship (Luke v. 3-10), the cursing of the barren fig-tree (Matt. xxi. 18-20; Mark xi. 12-14), the double miracle of the multiplying of the bread (Matt. xiv. 15-21, xv. 32-38; Mark vi. 34-44, viii. 1-9), afford clear illustrations of this principle. It is in the Fourth Gospel, however, that the symbolic spirit particularly appears; and that not merely in the miracles, but in lengthened narratives, and in many separate figures supplied by the Old Testament, by nature, or by incidents occurring at the moment. To the eye of the Evangelist the whole of creation waits for redemption; the whole of history reaches forth to Him 'that was to come;' the heart of man in all its stirrings seeks to grasp a reality to be found nowhere but in the revelation of the Father given in the Son. Everything, in short, has stamped upon it a shadowy outline of what is to be filled up when redemption is complete. The Logos, the Word, is the source of all that exists (chap. i. 3), and to the source from which it came will all that exists return. Every chapter of the Gospel would furnish illustration of what has been said.

It is impossible, however, to rest here; for this power of perceiving in outward things symbols of inner truths may be so strong as to appear in the mode of presenting not only the larger but also the smaller circumstances of any scene in which Jesus moves. The greater may draw along with it a symbolic interpretation of the less. Nay, out of numerous little details the mind which is quick to discern symbolic teaching may really select some in preference to others, because in them the impress of the symbolism may be more clearly traced. A writer may thus act without any thought of art or special design, even to a great degree unconscious of what he does, and simply because the higher object with which he has been engaged has a natural power to attract to itself, and to involve in its sweep the lower objects within its range. Illustrations of this will be found in the Commentary.

(3.) *The peculiar nature of the plan adopted by the Evangelist.* The Gospel appears to us most naturally to divide itself into seven sections, as follows :—

1. The Prologue : chap. i. 1-18. These verses contain a summary of the great facts of the whole Gospel, grouped in accordance with the Evangelist's purpose, and presented in the light in which he would have them viewed.

2. The presentation of Jesus upon the field of human history : chap. i. 19-ii. 11. Here Jesus appears before us as He is in Himself, the Son of God, and as He manifests Himself to His disciples before He begins His conflict in the world.

3. General sketch of the work of Jesus in the world : chap. ii. 12-iv. 54. Jesus passes beyond the circle of the disciples, and is rejected by the Jews when He would cleanse the house of His Father at Jerusalem. This leads to His revelation of Himself as the true temple which, destroyed by 'the Jews' in their persecution of Him even unto death, shall be raised again in His resurrection. Thus rejected by the representatives of the theocracy, He reveals Himself by His word to individuals who, whether of Judea, or Samaria, or Galilee of the nations, are—not by signs but by His word—subdued to faith.

4. The conflict of Jesus with the world : chap. v. 1-xii. 50. This section contains the main body of the Gospel, setting Jesus forth in the height of His conflict with darkness, error, and sin. He comes before us throughout in all the aspects in which we have in the Prologue been taught to behold Him, and He carries on the work there spoken of as given Him to do. He is Son of God, and Son of man, the Fulfiller of the greatest ordinances of the law, the Life and the Light of men. As He contends with the world, now in one and now in another of these manifestations of Himself, faith or unbelief is gradually developed and deepened in those who listen to Him. The believing and obedient are more and more attracted, the disobedient and unbelieving are more and more repelled, by His words and actions, until at last we hear, in the closing verses of chap. xii., the mournful echo of 'He came unto His own, and His own received Him not.' He has gathered His disciples to Himself. The darkness has not overcome Him (comp. chap. i. 5). He passes victorious through its opposition ; but His victory is not yet complete.

5. The revelation of Jesus to His own, together with the rest and peace and joy of faith : chap. xiii. 1-xvii. 26. The conflict of the previous section has divided men into the two great companies of faith and unbelief. These two companies are now to be followed, the one to its blessed rest in Him whom it has received, the other to those last steps in sin which, in the hour of apparent victory, really secure its final and ignominious defeat. The rest of faith is traced in the section now before us. The world is shut out from the sacred and tender fellowship of Jesus with His own. Judas leaves the company of the disciples (chap. xiii. 30). The rest of the disciples are 'clean ;' not only bathed, but with their feet afterwards washed, so that they are 'clean every whit' (chap. xiii. 10), and Jesus is alone with them. Therefore He pours forth upon them all the fulness of His love. His glory—the glory of 'grace and truth'—shines forth in all the inexpressible tenderness of the foot-washing, of the last discourse, and of the intercessory prayer.

6. The apparent victory but real defeat of unbelief : chap. xviii. 1-xx. 31. At first sight it may be thought that chap. xx., as containing the account of the Resurrection, ought to constitute a separate section ; but it is of the utmost importance for a proper comprehension of the plan of the Evangelist to observe that this cannot be. The Death and Resurrection of Jesus are in this Gospel always united, and cannot be separated in our thought ; the Redeemer with whom we have to do is One who rises through suffering to victory, through death to life (comp. remarks on the contents

of chap. xx.). Even the prominent thought of chap. xix. is not Jesus in humiliation, but Jesus 'lifted on high,' rising triumphant above the humiliation to which He is subjected, with a glory which appears the brighter the thicker the darkness that surrounds it. But this is exactly the thought of chap. xx.; and the two chapters cannot be kept distinct. Thus viewed, we see in the section as a whole the apparent victory, but the real defeat of unbelief. The enemies of Jesus seem to prevail. They seize Him; they bind Him; they lead Him before Annas and Caiaphas and Pilate; they nail Him to the cross; He dies and is buried. But their victory is only on the surface. Jesus Himself gives Himself up to the traitor and his band; offers no resistance to the binding; shows the infinite superiority of His spirit to that of the high priest; compels the homage of Pilate; voluntarily surrenders His life upon the cross; has the mocking of His enemies turned, under the providence of God, to their discomfiture and shame; and at last, rising from the grave, establishes the completeness of His victory when His enemies have done their worst. In short, throughout this section we are continually reminded that the triumphing of the wicked is but for a moment, and that God judgeth in the earth.

7. The Epilogue: chap. xxi. In this section we see the spread of the Church; the successful ministry of the Apostles when, at the word of Jesus, they cast their net into the great sea of the nations; the satisfaction and joy experienced by them in the results of protracted toil. Finally, we see in it the reinstitution in the person of Peter of Christian witness-bearing to Jesus, together with the intimation of the certain approach of that glorious time when the need of such testimony, with all its labours and sufferings, shall be superseded by the Second Coming of the Lord.

Such appears to be the plan of the Fourth Gospel,—a plan vindicated by the narrative itself, and having each of its sections marked off from the others by lines too distinct to be mistaken.

When, accordingly, we recall what has been already said as to the leading aim of the Fourth Gospel, we can have little difficulty in understanding the influence which that aim exerts upon the selection of particulars and upon the structure of the narrative as a whole. If in this Gospel pre-eminently Jesus reveals Himself with so much frequency and fulness, we have seen that this is the very truth which the Evangelist has set himself to unfold. Its prominence can throw no suspicion upon the historical reality of the representation. We are prepared to find in this Gospel a revelation of Jesus and His own glory different both in manner and degree from that presented in the earlier Gospels.

The considerations that have now been adduced with regard to the history of the Fourth Gospel, the external and internal evidence bearing upon its Johannine authorship, and the striking peculiarity of the characteristics by which it is marked, seem sufficient to satisfy every reasonable inquirer that the uniform tradition of the Church, pointing to the Apostle John as its author, is correct. It is not to be denied, however, that there remain difficulties, some of a general nature, others arising out of special details contained in the Gospel itself. Our readers will readily acknowledge that it is wholly impossible within our limits to treat these with a fulness worthy of their importance. Of the second class of difficulties, too, it is less necessary to speak, for they will naturally present themselves as we comment on the text of the Gospel. Perhaps the only points that require notice in an Introduction are two belonging to the first class,—the relations in which the Fourth Gospel stands (1) to the Apocalypse, (2) to the earlier Gospels. The first of these must be deferred until the Apocalypse comes under our notice in this work. Upon the second we say a few words in bringing this Introduction to a close.

V. *Relation of the Fourth to the earlier Gospels.*—This relation is often supposed to be one of irreconcilable divergence, and the divergence is found not only in particular statements in which the Fourth Gospel touches the others, but in the history as a whole. Alleged differences of the first kind will be noticed when we meet them in the course of exposition. Looking, therefore, only at the history as a whole, the reader will easily observe that the apparent divergence runs in two main lines, one having reference to the outward framework, the other to the portraiture of Jesus, in Himself and in His discourses. As to the first of these, in its two branches, the *scene* and the *duration* of the ministry, little need be said. It is true that in the earlier Gospels the scene, up to the Passion week, appears to be Galilee alone, while in the Fourth it is even more Jerusalem and Judea; that in the former the duration seems less than one year, in the latter more than two. Yet it is to be borne in mind that no one of our narratives professes to give a complete history of the life of our Lord upon earth. Their fragmentariness is one of their essential characteristics, admitted by all in the case of the Synoptists, distinctly declared by John in his own case (chap. xx. 30, xxi. 25). All, therefore, that we are entitled to ask is, that the earlier Gospels shall leave room for the larger area and the longer time borne witness to by the latter; and this they do.

There is more, however, to be said; for our different groups of authorities mutually imply the labours of Jesus in those portions of the land of Palestine which occupy a subordinate position in their own narratives. It is unnecessary to prove this with regard to John, so frequent is the mention made by him of the ministry in Galilee. The notices of the others with regard to the Judean ministry are not so plain; but even in them there occur passages which are unintelligible, except on the supposition that such a ministry had existed. Such passages are Matt. xxiii. 37 (comp. Luke xiii. 34), where the words 'how often' are almost conclusive upon the point; Matt. xxi. 8, indicating a previous acquaintance to account for the enthusiasm; Luke x. 38–42, referring most probably to Bethany; while, if in Luke iv. 44 we accept the reading, 'And He preached in the synagogues of *Judea*,'—and the evidence in its favour seems to be overwhelming,—the whole controversy is set at rest. It may be added that the words of Peter in Acts x. 37–39 have an important bearing upon the point; and that all the probabilities of the case are opposed to the supposition either that Jesus would confine Himself to Galilee, or that the great drama of His life and death could have been enacted in less than a single year.

More important than the outward framework of the history is the portraiture of Jesus presented in the Fourth Gospel; and this again may be naturally divided into two branches, the *Person* and the *discourses*. As to the first of these, it is no doubt in John alone that we meet with the conception of Jesus as the Logos, or Word of God. Yet there is ample ground to justify the conclusion that it is not the object of the writer so to delineate Jesus as to make the Logos conception the dominating conception of His personality. The remark has often been made, that in the whole course of the Gospel Jesus does not once apply the designation of Logos to Himself,—neither in the three aspects of Jesus already spoken of as prominent in chap. i. (comp. p. xxiv.), nor in the closing summary of chap. xx. 31, is the Logos mentioned; and no passage can be quoted in which the fact that Jesus is the Logos is associated with 'witness' borne to Him. This last fact has not been sufficiently noticed, but its importance appears to us to be great. If there is one characteristic of the Fourth Gospel more marked than another, it is the perfect and absolute simplicity with which the writer, whether speaking of himself, of Jesus, or of the Baptist, resolves the proclamation of what is uttered into 'witness' or 'bearing witness.' That term includes in it the



whole burden of the commission given to each of them to fulfil. Whatever else they may be, they are first and most of all 'witnesses.' But if so, and if to enforce the Logos idea be the main purpose of the Gospel so far as it refers to the Person of Christ, we may well ask why that idea and 'witness' borne to it are never brought together? Jesus is witnessed to as 'the Messiah, which is, being interpreted, the Christ,' as the one 'of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did speak,' as 'the Son of God, the King of Israel:' he is not witnessed to as the Logos, although he *is* the Logos; and that single fact is sufficient to prove that the fourth Evangelist has no thought of presenting his Master in a light different from that in which He is presented by his predecessors.

In addition to this it may be observed that we have, in our two groups of Gospels, the very same interchange of allusions with regard to the Person of Christ that we have already observed when speaking of the scene of the ministry. If in the Fourth Gospel Jesus is pre-eminently Son of God, He is not less distinctly Son of man. If, again, in the earlier Gospels He is pre-eminently Son of man, He at the same time performs acts and claims authority not human but Divine. He forgives sins (Matt. ix. 6), is Lord of the Sabbath (Matt. xii. 8), rises from the dead (Matt. xvii. 9), comes in His kingdom (Matt. xvi. 28), sits upon the throne of His glory (Matt. xix. 28); nay, in one passage He speaks of Himself as Son of man at the very time when He appropriates as true the confession of Peter, that He is 'the Christ, the Son of the living God' (Matt. xvi. 13-28). Many other passages in the earlier Gospels lead to the same conclusion; so that, although the teaching of the Fourth as to the Divine nature of Jesus is richer than theirs, the truth itself, so far from being excluded from our minds, must be taken along with us in reading them before they can be properly understood. Without it, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to combine their expressions into a consistent whole.

If now we turn from the Person to the *discourses* of Christ, as these are presented in the Fourth Gospel, it is impossible to deny that they differ widely from those of the earlier Gospels, both in form and in substance. In the earlier Gospels the truths taught by our Lord are for the most part set before us in a manner simple and easily understood, in parables, in short pithy sayings, in sentences partaking largely of the proverbial and not difficult to remember, in a style adapted to the popular mind. In the Fourth Gospel not only is there no parable properly so called, but aphorisms are much more rarely met with, and the teaching of Jesus takes a shape adapted to enlightened and spiritually-minded disciples rather than an unenlightened multitude. Nor is the difference in substance less marked. In the earlier Gospels the instructions and sayings of Jesus have mainly reference to the more outward aspects of His kingdom, to His own fulfilling of the law, to the moral reformation He was to effect, to the practical righteousness required of His disciples. In the other they have reference to the profound, the mystical, relations existing between the Father and Himself, between Himself and His people, and among the various members of His flock.

Again, however, it is to be noticed that the very same interchange of allusions which we have already found existing in our two classes of authorities with regard to the outward framework of the history and the nature of Christ's Person, exists also in their accounts of His discourses. Passages may be quoted from John partaking at least largely of the aphoristic character of the teaching generally found in the first three Evangelists. Thus chap. iv. 44 may be compared with Mark vi. 4; chap. xii. 8 with Mark xiv. 7; chap. xii. 25 with Matt. x. 39, xvi. 25; chap. xiii. 16 with Matt. x. 24, Luke vi. 40; chap. xiii. 20 with Matt. x. 40; chap. xv. 20

with Matt. x. 25; chap. xv. 21 with Matt. x. 22; chap. xviii. 11 with Matt. xxvi. 52; chap. xx. 23 with Matt. xvi. 19. Although, too, there are no parables in the Fourth Gospel, many of its figures so much resemble parables, could be so easily drawn out into parables, that they have been appropriately described as 'parables transformed.'<sup>1</sup> Such are the passages relating to the blowing of the wind, the fields white unto the harvest, the corn of wheat which must die in the ground before it springs up, the sorrow and subsequent joy of the woman in travail, the good shepherd, the true vine (chap. iii. 8, iv. 35, xii. 24, x. 1-16, xv. 1-8). Nor can we forget that, in the Fourth Gospel, it is for the most part a different audience to which Jesus speaks. He addresses not so much the mass of the people as 'the Jews;' and as those so designated undoubtedly comprised a large number of the most highly educated of the day, we may expect that they will be spoken to in a tone different from that adopted towards others. The words of chap. vi. 41 (see the Commentary) are in this respect peculiarly important; for it appears from them that the 'hard sayings' found in the remaining portion of the discourse given in that chapter were intended, not for the 'multitude,' but for the ruling class. The words of ver. 59 might at first sight lead to a different impression.

On the other hand, there are clear indications in the earlier Gospels that Jesus did not always speak in that sententious and parabolic style which they mainly represent him as employing. In this respect the words of Matt. xi. 25-27 cannot be too frequently referred to, for the argument founded upon them is perfectly incontrovertible. They show that a style of teaching precisely similar to that which meets us in the Fourth Gospel was known to the first. Keim, indeed, has attempted to weaken the force of the argument by the allegation that the words are not found in 'the ordinary every-day intercourse' of Jesus, but at an 'isolated and exalted moment of his life.'<sup>2</sup> Such moments, however, are precisely those which John has undertaken to record; or, if this ought not to be said, it is Jesus in the frame of mind peculiar to such moments that he especially presents to us. If, therefore, the words given by Matthew are appropriate to the time when they were spoken, the words given by John, though on many different occasions of a like kind, are not less so. Nor is this the only passage of the earlier Gospels that may be quoted as possessing the isolated and exalted character referred to. The words at the institution of the Last Supper are not less marked: 'Take, eat, this is my body. . . . Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom' (Matt. xxvi. 26-29). Such words exhibit the very same lofty mystical spirit that meets us in the Gospel of John. They are as much out of keeping with the practical sententious character of the teaching of Jesus in the other parts of these Gospels (if indeed such an expression is to be used at all) as anything contained in the Gospel with which we are now dealing. A similar remark may be made with regard to the eschatological discourses of Jesus in the earlier Gospels (comp. Matt. xxiv.), and to His answer to the high priest (Matt. xxvi. 64), the difference between them and the Sermon on the Mount being quite as great as that between His general teaching in the Fourth Gospel and in the Gospels which preceded it.

It is in this thought, indeed, as it seems to us, that the explanation of the point now before us is to be found. The utterances of Jesus in John belong to the tragic aspect of His work. No one will deny that, taking the facts even of the first three

<sup>1</sup> Westcott, *Intr. to Study of the Gospels*, p. 268.

<sup>2</sup> Keim, *Engl. transl.*, i. p. 176.

Gospels alone, the life of the Redeemer upon earth was marked by all the elements of the most powerful and pathetic tragedy. His perpetual struggle with evil, His love and self-sacrifice, met with opposition and contempt; His bearing the sorrows and the sins of men, His unshaken confidence in God, His sufferings and death, the constant presence of His Father with Him, and the glorious vindication given Him at last in the Resurrection and Ascension, supply particulars possessed of a power to move us such as no other life has known. In this point of view John looks at them. His Gospel is not the record of ordinary life. It is the record of a life which passes through all the most solemn and touching experiences of man, and which makes its appeal to the most powerful emotions of the heart. This is very strikingly exhibited in the light in which Jesus is set before us at the first moment when he passes beyond the circle of His disciples to the larger field of the world (chap. ii. 12, see Commentary); and it is not less apparent in the pathos that so often marks the language of the writer (chap. i. 11, xii. 37). Hence the almost exclusive presentation of tragic scenes, of 'exalted moments,' and the preservation of discourses suitable to them.

The remarks now made, though applying mainly to the form, may be applied also to the substance of the discourses of the Fourth Gospel. It must be felt, too, that the profound instructions of Jesus contained in it are not out of keeping with the personality or character of the Speaker. Was He truly the Son of God? Did He come to meet every necessity of our nature? not only to enforce that practical morality to which conscience bears witness, but to reveal those deeper truths on the relation of man to God, and in Him to his brother man, for which a revelation was especially needed; then there is nothing strange in the fact that He should have spoken so much of matters lying far beyond mortal ken. Rather, surely, should we expect that, with His own heart filled with the deep things of God, He would speak out of its abundance; that, dwelling Himself amidst the great realities of the unseen and spiritual world, He would many a time lead into them the disciples whom He loved, and whom He would guide into all the truth.

Or, if it be said that these profound teachings were spoken not to friends, but to determined enemies, the principle of reply is the same. Here also there is the same elevation above the level of common life. These 'Jews,' so constantly addressed, are not the nation, but those in whom the outward, carnal, selfish spirit of a degenerate Judaism was concentrated (see Commentary). As to the existence of this class there can be no doubt. The title, indeed, is peculiar to John, but the class itself meets us in the earlier Evangelists. If, then, it existed, we may well ask whether it is not represented in the Fourth Gospel as addressed in the very manner in which such an audience must be spoken to. Let us suppose any Church of our own day become as carnal as the Jewish Church in the days of Christ. What other course could a reformer pursue, what other language could he use, but the course and the language of Jesus here? A worldly *church* cannot be spoken to like the world; self-chosen darkness cannot be treated like the darkness of a naturally unfortunate condition.

What has been said goes far to explain the peculiar character of the discourses of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel. But there are other questions in connection with them to which it is necessary to allude. Are they purely objective? Are they a record of the exact words used in the circumstances referred to? Are they free from any trace of the mind through which they passed in their transmission to us? It has been urged that these questions must be answered in the negative, partly because such long and profound discourses could not have been remembered at a distance of fifty years from the time when they were spoken, partly because their resemblance to the First Epistle

of John is a proof that in these discourses it is John who speaks rather than his Master. Neither consideration has much weight. It cannot be imagined that only at the end of fifty years would the Evangelist endeavour to remember them. Rather throughout all that time must they have been the theme of his constant and loving meditation; day after day and night after night he must have brought up before him the sight of that much-loved form and the sound of that well-remembered voice; and every word of his Master, even many a word which he has not recorded, must have been ever flowing gently through his heart. John too had the promise of the Spirit to 'bring to his remembrance all things that Jesus said to him' (chap. xiv. 26); and, to whatever extent we admit his own human agency in the composition of his Gospel, we cannot forget that the fulfilment of this promise must have secured him from the errors of ordinary writers, and enabled him, as they could not have done, to present to his readers the perfect truth.

Nor, further, is the supposition with which we are now dealing needed to explain the fact that the tone of much of our Lord's teaching in this Gospel bears a striking resemblance to that of the First Epistle of John. Why should not the Gospel explain the Epistle rather than the Epistle the Gospel? Why should not John have been formed upon the model of Jesus rather than the Jesus of this Gospel be the reflected image of himself? Surely it may be left to all candid minds to say whether, to adopt only the lowest supposition, the creative intellect of Jesus was not far more likely to mould His disciple to a conformity with itself, than the receptive spirit of the disciple to give birth by its own efforts to that conception of a Redeemer which so infinitely surpasses the loftiest image of man's own creation.

While, however, this may be said, it may at the same time be allowed that up to a certain point the form in which the discourses are presented, sometimes even their very language, has been affected by the individuality of the writer. Lengthy as they not infrequently are, they are obviously compressed statements of what must have occupied a still longer time in delivery, with much of the questioning and answering that must have occurred in a protracted controversy suppressed. Occasionally the very language of the original (as in the use of an imperfect tense) indicates this; while the reference at the feast of Tabernacles (chap. vii. 23) to the healing of the impotent man (chap. v.), which must have taken place at least months before, is a proof that that miracle done on the Sabbath had been kept fresh in the minds of those addressed by many incidents and words not mentioned. Links may often be thus wanting which it is difficult for us to supply, and compression could hardly fail to give additional sharpness to what is said. Besides this, the tragic spirit of the Gospel, of which we have already spoken, may be expected to exercise an influence over the manner in which discourses are presented in it. Keeping these considerations in view, we shall look, in the scenes of the Fourth Gospel, for such details as may best embody the essential characteristics of any narrative which the Evangelist is desirous to present to us, rather than for all the particulars with which he was acquainted. We shall understand, too, the artificial structure, the double pictures and parallelisms which meet us in the longer discourses, such as those of chaps. v., x., xiv., xv., xvi. (see the Commentary).

The sayings and discourses of Jesus in the Fourth Gospel are not, therefore, to be regarded as in every respect simple reproductions of the precise words spoken by Him. The true conclusion seems to be that we have here a procedure on the part of the Evangelist precisely parallel to that which marks his method of dealing with the historical incidents of the life of Jesus. These are selected, grouped, presented under the dominating power of the idea which he knows that they express. So also

with the words of Christ. They also are selected, grouped, presented under the power of the fundamental idea which prevails throughout them.

By frankly admitting this, much is gained. On the one hand, historical accuracy, in its deepest and truest sense, is not impaired: the *result* produced in the mind of the reader is exactly that which was produced by our Lord Himself upon those who witnessed His actions or heard His words. On the other hand, the facts of the case receive a natural explanation. Above all, the whole procedure on the part of John is in harmony with the principles of Him who would have us always rise through His words to that Divine ideal which they reveal.

One other remark ought to be made before we close. In so far as the difference between John and the Synoptists affords ground for an argument, its bearing is favourable, not unfavourable, to the authenticity of our Gospel. Let us assume for a moment the earliest date assigned to it by the opponents of its apostolical authority, and what is the phenomenon presented to us? That about A.D. 110 a writer, obviously setting before himself the purpose of giving a delineation of the life of Jesus and of impressing it on the Church, departed entirely from the traditional records that had now taken a settled form; that he transferred the Messiah's labours to scenes previously unheard of; gave to His ministry a duration previously unknown; represented both His person and His work in a light wholly new; and then expected the Church, which had by this time spread abroad into all regions, through three generations of men, to accept his account as correct. In the very statement of the case its incredibility appears. Only on the supposition that the writer of the Fourth Gospel felt that the Church for which he wrote would recognise essential harmony, not contradiction, between his representation and that of his predecessors, that men would see in it that enlarging of the picture of a loved personality which faithful memories supply, can we explain his having written as he has done.

We have spoken, as far as our limited space will allow, of some of those points connected with the Gospel of John which seem likely to be of most interest to the readers of a Commentary like the present, or which may prepare them to understand better the following exposition. It remains only that we indicate in a sentence or two the principles upon which that exposition is founded.

Our main, it may almost be said our single, effort has been to ascertain the meaning of the words before us, and to trace the thought alike of the writer himself and of the great Master whom he sets forth. In doing this we have endeavoured to bestow more than ordinary care upon every turn of expression in the original, upon every change of construction, however slight, effected by prepositions, tenses, cases, or even order of words. Many such changes have no doubt escaped our notice, and some have been left without remark because we felt unable to supply a satisfactory explanation of them. Even as it is, however, it is probable that not a few will think that we have been too minute; and that, in spending time upon what they will regard as trifling particulars, we have paid too little attention to those larger statements of truth which might have been better adapted to the readers for whom we write. From such an opinion we venture entirely to dissent. No trustworthy statements of general truth can be at any time gained without the most complete induction of particulars; and if this be true of any book of Scripture, it is even peculiarly true of the Fourth Gospel. The care bestowed upon it by its writer is one of its most remarkable characteristics. Whatever be the sublimity to which it rises, however impassioned its language, or however deep the flow of its emotion, every phrase or word or construction contained in it is fitted into its place as if the calmest and most deliberate purpose had presided over the selection. It is the skill

of the loftiest feeling, though unconsciously exercised, that has made the Gospel what it is. The truth contained in it has woven for itself a garb corresponding in the most minute particulars to its nature, and every change in the direction even of one of its threads is a testimony to some change in the aspects of the truth by whose living energy the whole was fashioned. If, therefore, we have erred in connection with this point, we have erred not by excess but by defect. A rich harvest still awaits those who will be more faithful to the principle or more successful in carrying it out than we have been.

It seems unnecessary to add much more as to the principles by which we have been guided in our work. Innumerable references might easily have been made to the extensive literature connected with this Gospel, and to the opinions of those who have commented upon it before us. We have thought it best, except in one or two instances, to refrain from giving them. In addition to the Commentaries of Luthardt, Godet, Lange, Meyer, and others, which it would have been presumption to neglect, we have endeavoured to use all other helps within our reach. Unfortunately, the noble Commentary of Dr. Westcott did not appear until almost the last of the following pages had been printed off. It was thus impossible to take advantage of it; but to the personal communications of that eminent scholar, and to the discussions which have taken place in the New Testament Revision Company, in regard alike to the Fourth Gospel and the other books of the New Testament, we probably owe more than we are ourselves aware of. At the same time, we are not conscious of having yielded in any instance to authority however great. Under a deep sense at once of the difficulty and responsibility of our task, we have submitted every question to independent investigation; and the results, very often different from those of our predecessors, must be left to speak for themselves.

It would be too much to expect that our readers will find every difficulty discussed which meets them in their own study of this Gospel. One of the most marked peculiarities of such a book is that, in the fulness of its life and meaning, it strikes every attentive student in a different light, and suggests to each thoughts and problems which do not occur to others. All that we can say is, that in no single instance have we consciously passed by a difficulty that we ourselves felt; and we may perhaps venture to hope that the principles upon which these have been treated may be applicable to others of which we had not thought.

The principles upon which the Text of the Gospel has been determined were explained by one of the authors of this Commentary in the second part of a small work on 'The Words of the New Testament,' published some years ago, and now out of print. In the translation of the text, we have aimed at correctness rather than ease of continuous expression; and if (in this respect differing from the first volume of this Commentary) we have almost always given a full translation at the head of the notes, the reason is easily explained. It seemed desirable, where not only every word, but even the order of all the words is important, that the reader should have the complete sentence directly under his eye.

It may be well to say that, owing to various circumstances on which it is unnecessary to dwell, the appearance of our Commentary has been most unexpectedly delayed. Nearly three years have passed since the earlier portions of it were printed. It is the more possible, therefore, that there may be occasional inconsistencies between the earlier and the later pages. We say this without knowing that it is so, and with the hope that, if such inconsistencies do exist, they are not of an important character.

In conclusion, we may be permitted to say that both the authors of the following Commentary hold themselves responsible for the whole. No part of it is the work of

either by himself ; and they have wrought together with a harmony which, through all the time it has occupied them, has been to both a source of constant thankfulness and joy. But they desire to forget themselves, and they ask their readers to forget them, in the one common aim to discover the true meaning of a Gospel which the eloquent Herder long ago described as 'the heart of Jesus.'

*July 1880*







# THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN.

## CHAPTER I. 1-18.

### *The Prologue.*

- 1 **I**N the beginning was the <sup>a</sup> Word, and the Word was with <sup>b</sup> God, and <sup>c</sup> the Word was God.
- 2, 3 The same was in the beginning with God. <sup>d</sup> All things were made<sup>1</sup> by<sup>a</sup> him; and without him was not any thing made<sup>2</sup> that was made. <sup>e</sup> In him was life; <sup>f</sup> and the life was the <sup>g</sup> light of men.<sup>b</sup> And the light shineth in <sup>h</sup> darkness; and the darkness comprehended<sup>7</sup> it not.
- 6 <sup>i</sup> There was<sup>a</sup> a man sent from God, whose name was John.
- 7 The same came for a <sup>j</sup> witness, to <sup>k</sup> bear <sup>l</sup> witness of <sup>m</sup> the Light, that all *men* through him might believe.<sup>18</sup> He was not that <sup>n</sup> Light, but was sent to <sup>o</sup> bear witness of that <sup>p</sup> Light.
- 9 That <sup>q</sup> was the <sup>r</sup> true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh<sup>1</sup> into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him,<sup>18</sup> and <sup>s</sup> the world knew him not. He came unto his own,<sup>19</sup> and his own <sup>t</sup> received<sup>20</sup> him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become <sup>u</sup> the sons<sup>21</sup> of God, *even* to them that believe on<sup>22</sup> his <sup>v</sup> name:<sup>23</sup>
- 13 <sup>w</sup> Which were born,<sup>24</sup> not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.
- 14 And <sup>x</sup> the Word was made <sup>y</sup> flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his <sup>z</sup> glory, the glory as of the <sup>aa</sup> only begotten of the Father,) full of <sup>ab</sup> grace and truth.<sup>25</sup>
- 1 came into being <sup>ac</sup> through  
<sup>ad</sup> and apart from him not even one thing came into being.  
<sup>ae</sup> That which hath come into being was life in him  
<sup>af</sup> ; <sup>ag</sup> in the <sup>ah</sup> overcame <sup>ai</sup> arose  
<sup>aj</sup> omit a <sup>ak</sup> that he might <sup>al</sup> concerning  
<sup>am</sup> that all might believe through him <sup>an</sup> the  
<sup>ao</sup> but he was that he might <sup>ap</sup> concerning the <sup>aq</sup> There  
<sup>ar</sup> man, coming <sup>as</sup> came into being through him  
<sup>at</sup> own home <sup>au</sup> accepted <sup>av</sup> right to become children  
<sup>aw</sup> in <sup>ax</sup> ; <sup>ay</sup> begotten  
<sup>az</sup> And the Word became flesh; and he set his tabernacle among us, and we beheld his glory (glory as of an only-begotten from a father),—full of grace and truth.

- 15 John bare witness of<sup>26</sup> him, and cried,<sup>27</sup> saying, This was he of whom I spake, "He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for<sup>28</sup> he was before me.
- 16 And of his<sup>29</sup> fulness have all we<sup>30</sup> received, and grace for
- 17 grace. For<sup>31</sup> the law was given by Moses, *but* "grace<sup>32</sup> and
- 18 "truth came by<sup>33</sup> Jesus Christ. "No man<sup>34</sup> hath seen God at any time; the "only begotten Son, which is<sup>35</sup> in the bosom of the Father, "he hath<sup>36</sup> declared *him*.

<sup>26</sup> See ver. 27.  
<sup>27</sup> Ver. 14;  
 Col. i. 19.  
<sup>28</sup> Rom. iii. 24.  
 v. 20, 21;  
 Eph. i. 6.  
 iv. 7.  
<sup>29</sup> See chap.  
 xiv. 6.  
<sup>30</sup> Chap. vi. 46.  
<sup>31</sup> See ver. 14.  
<sup>32</sup> Matt. xi. 27;  
 chap. xvii. 6.  
 26;  
 Heb. i. 1, 2, 3.

<sup>26</sup> beareth witness concerning

<sup>27</sup> hath cried

<sup>28</sup> is become before me, because

<sup>29</sup> Because out of his fulness we all

<sup>30</sup> Because

<sup>31</sup> through Moses: grace

<sup>32</sup> through

<sup>33</sup> No one

<sup>34</sup> One who is only-begotten God, he that is

<sup>35</sup> *omit* hath

CONTENTS. The Prologue of the Gospel of John stands in the most intimate connection with the plan and purpose of the Gospel as a whole. It is not to be regarded as a philosophical speculation to which the historical life of the Redeemer shall be afterwards conformed. It contains rather a short summary of that life in the light in which the Evangelist had been divinely taught to regard it, and of the impressions which he had gathered from it as the manifestation, the revelation, of God Himself to men. It is to illustrate and unfold this conception, which is at once metaphysical, theological, and historical, that the fourth Evangelist writes. Hence he begins with a description of what Jesus was in Himself, in the profoundest depths of His being; passing from that to what He 'became' in order that in Him men might so behold the glory of the Father as to be transfigured into the same glory, reaching onward to the fulfilment of their own destiny, to be children of God. The Prologue is usually divided into three parts, ending with ver. 5, ver. 13, ver. 18, respectively. Of these divisions, the first brings before us the thought of the Eternal Word,—in Himself (ver. 1), and as the source of created being, of life, of light (vers. 2-5). The subject of the next thirteen verses is the Word as revealed to men, first generally (vers. 6-13), and secondly by the Incarnation (vers. 14-18). These two sections (in accordance with an important principle of structure, characterizing both this Gospel and the Apocalypse), though apparently successive, are really parallel: the thought is thus presented under two aspects, the second fuller and more definite than the first. In the former section we read of the Baptist, sent to bear witness concerning the manifestation of the Word as the Light (vers. 6-8); then of the two-fold results of this manifestation, but especially of the blessedness of those who received the Word (vers. 9-13). The next section records the Incarnation of the Word (ver. 14); the testimony borne by the Baptist to the glory of the Incarnate Word (ver. 15); and, as before (but with greater clearness and definiteness, and from the point of view of human experience), the results of this crowning manifestation of the Word. This analysis, whilst showing the general parallelism of the thoughts in the several divisions of the Prologue, shows also that the division as hitherto indicated is insufficient. Ver. 14 clearly commences a new section, and yet ver. 15 (relating to the Baptist) immediately recalls the commencement of the former section

(ver. 6). If, however, ver. 14 be carefully examined, it will be seen that it stands in a definite relation to the first section, the opening words ('And the Word became flesh') being antithetical to ver. 1, and the remainder of the verse (which sets forth generally the manifestation of the Incarnate Word) corresponding to vers. 2-5. Hence the structure of the Prologue as a whole may be presented in the following tabular form:—

*Section I. The Word.*

(a) In Himself (ver. 1).

(b) In His general manifestations (vers. 2-5).

*Section II. The Word appearing in the world.*

(a) The Baptist's general witness concerning the Word, as the Light (vers. 6-8).

(b) The general results of the manifestation of the Word (vers. 9-13).

*Section III. The Word fully revealed in the Incarnation.*

A. (1) The Incarnate Word Himself (ver. 14 a: parallel to ver. 1).

(2) The Incarnate Word in His general manifestation of Himself (ver. 14 b: parallel to vers. 2-5).

B. The Baptist's witness, now definite and personal (ver. 15: parallel to vers. 6-8).

C. The complete results of this manifestation of the Word in the case of all who receive Him (vers. 16-18: parallel to vers. 9-13).

Ver. 1. *In the beginning was the Word.* This sublime opening of the Gospel carries our thoughts at once to the no less sublime opening of the Book of Genesis, whose first words the Evangelist certainly had present to his mind. He too will tell of a creation, and a creation has a 'beginning.' The words 'in the beginning,' taken by themselves, do not express the idea of eternal pre-existence; but they leave room for it, and in this respect they stand contrasted with the phrase 'from the beginning,' which often meets us in the writings of John (viii. 44; 1 John i. 1, ii. 7, 24, iii. 8). They denote simply the point of time; and the difference of thought with which they are connected, as compared with Gen. i. 1, is to be found not in the meaning of 'beginning,' but in the different *direction* which the writer takes, and in the verb which he employs. In Gen. i. 1 the sacred historian starts from the beginning and comes downwards, thus keeping us in the course of time. Here he starts from the same point, but goes upwards, thus taking us into the

eternity preceding time. In Gen. i. 1 we are told that God 'in the beginning *created*,'—an act done in time. Here we are told that 'in the beginning the Word *was*,' a verb strongly antithetical to 'came into being' (vers. 3, 14, comp. viii. 58), and implying an absolute existence preceding the point referred to. As that which is absolute, self-existent, not created—that which *is*—is eternal, so the predication of eternity is involved in the clause before us taken as a whole.

He who thus 'was in the beginning,' who, as we afterwards read, 'was with God,' and 'was God,' here bears the name of 'the Word' (Logos). In one other verse of the Prologue this name is repeated (ver. 14); but it does not occur again in the Gospel. Nor shall we find the term (used, as here, simply and without qualification) in any other passage of the New Testament. The nearest approach is found in Rev. xix. 13, where the name of the righteous Conqueror and King is given as 'The Word of God.' Two or more other passages may be said rather to recall to our thought the name we are considering than to present examples of its use; see especially 1 John i. 1 ('the word of life,' followed by 'the life was manifested,' ver. 2), and Heb. iv. 12. Though, however, this term is not really adopted by any New Testament writer except John, it is not peculiar to him in any other sense. When he wrote, it was a familiar and current term of theology. It has sometimes, indeed, been maintained that John's usage must be taken by itself, since with very much of the theological speculation in which this term so freely occurs he can have had no sympathy. We shall see that John's usage certainly does in an important sense stand alone; but as it is absolutely impossible that he, living at Ephesus (to say nothing of his long residence in Palestine), should have been unacquainted with the current doctrines respecting the Logos, it is inconceivable that he can have taken up the term without reference to these doctrines. Hence it is with the history of the term that we first have to do.

Every careful reader of the Old Testament is struck by the prominence given in certain passages to 'the word of the Lord,' language which almost implies personal action being sometimes connected with this 'word.' See, for example, Ps. xxxiii. 6, cv. 19, cvii. 20; 1 Sam. iii. 21. The root of this usage (at all events in very many instances) is to be found in the first chapter of Genesis, where the successive acts of creation are associated with divine words (see Ps. xxxiii. 6). Such passages as these, with their partial personification of the word of God, seem to have powerfully impressed early Jewish teaching. There was much besides in the Old Testament to strengthen this impression,—as the frequent references in the Pentateuch to the Angel of Jehovah, and the language used of Wisdom in the Book of Proverbs (chap. viii.; compare also chaps. i., iii., ix., and Job xxviii.). Thus a minute study of Scripture language was the means of leading Jewish teachers to connect divine acts with some personified attribute of God rather than with God Himself, or to seek for some medium of communication between God and man where the Scriptures themselves had spoken of direct revelation or fellowship. What other influences aided this tendency of thought, we cannot here inquire. The results are patent, especially in the Targums or Chaldee paraphrases of Scripture. The dates of the several Targums which are extant have been

a matter of controversy: for our purpose, however, this is not of consequence, as it is acknowledged on all hands that every one of these paraphrases contains early materials. We cannot within our limits quote at length; but a reference to the following passages in Etheridge's translation of the Targums on the Pentateuch will show how far the writers went in substituting 'the Word' (*Memra*) for the name of God Himself. In the Targum of Onkelos, see Gen. iii. 8, xlviii. 20; Num. xxiii. 4, 21; Deut. ix. 3: in that of Pseudo-Jonathan, Gen. iii. 8; Num. xxiii. 4, 21: in the Jerusalem Targum, besides the three last mentioned, Gen. xviii. 1, xvi. 13, xix. 24. From the Targum of Jonathan Ben Uzziel may be quoted Isa. lxiii. 7; Mal. iii. 1. An examination of these passages will show how familiar to Jews had become the conception of the Word of God, through whom God made Himself known to men. Very little light is thrown upon the subject by the several Apocryphal books, and hence it will not be necessary to refer to them here. It is otherwise with the writings of the great Alexandrian philosopher Philo. In these the doctrine of the Divine Word holds a prominence which it would be hard to exaggerate. Yet from the multitude of passages in which Philo speaks of the attributes and actions of the Word, it is impossible to deduce with any certainty a clear statement of doctrine. Now the Word seems distinctly personal, now an attribute of God personified. In some passages the idea can be traced back to the thought of 'spoken word'; in many others Philo takes up the other meaning of the Greek word Logos, viz. *reason*. Hence, though Philo speaks of the universe as created through the Logos, yet in other passages the Logos is the design or the idea of creation in the mind of God.

It is not necessary to carry this inquiry farther, since our only object is to collect the chief elements of thought associated with this term when John wrote. As has been said, he could not be ignorant of these various forms of teaching; if not ignorant, he could not be indifferent on the one hand to the good, or on the other to the evil, which they contained. He recognised the various teachings as a providential preparation for the true theology. In these introductory verses he adopts the term, but so defines it as to fix its meaning for all Christians. There is One by whom the Eternal and Invisible God reveals Himself: the Revealer is a Person: the Revealer is Himself God. Not only in outward manifestation, but also in inward fellowship with the heart, God reveals Himself by the Word of God, who is God. In one instance John appears to take up and ratify the wider application of the term which we have noticed above. This first verse takes us beyond the region of revelation to man: when 'in the beginning,' beyond the limits of time, 'the Logos was,' the thought of 'speech' ceases to give us any help towards grasping the meaning; and, if we may venture to interpret the term at all in this application, we can only think of the human analogy by which we pass from the *uttered word* to the *thought* or *reason* of the speaker.

To all that John teaches respecting the Logos, the Lord's own teaching directly led. The doctrine of these verses is identical with that of chaps. v. 19, vi. 57, x. 30, xvii. 5, etc. The personal application of the term is not found in our Lord's

discourses; but many of those recorded in this Gospel contain remarkable examples of that exalted use of 'the word' of God to which, as we have seen, the history of this sublime name may ultimately be traced.

**And the Word was with God:** the second of the three statements made in this verse regarding the Word, and obviously higher than the first. It is impossible to convey in English the full force of the preposition 'with' in the Greek, for it denotes not merely being beside, but maintaining communion and intercourse with (comp. Mark vi. 3; 1 John i. 2, ii. 1).

**And the Word was God:** the third and highest statement respecting the Word. The Word is possessed of divine essence; in that being in which He 'was,' He so possesses the divine attributes that He is God. There is difference of personality, but unity of nature. In this last clause the climax of the three clauses is complete.

**Ver. 2. The same was in the beginning with God.** 'The same'—He who has just been spoken of as God—was in the beginning 'with God': *i.e.*, 'He of whom I have spoken as God, was in the beginning in active, eternal communion with God,—not simply the Word with God, but God with God.' The elements of the thought have been given in ver. 1, but in their combination they acquire new force. The special object of these words seems to be to prepare for the next verse; it is only when we have been taught concerning 'God with God' that we are prepared to hear of the creation of all things 'through' the Divine Word. He with whom the Divine Word 'was in the beginning' created all through Him.

**Ver. 3. All things came into being through him, and apart from him not even one thing came into being.** Such a combination of two clauses, the first positive, the second negative (see note on ver. 20), is characteristic of John's style. The two together assert the truth contained in them with a universality and force not otherwise attainable. This truth is, that 'all things'—not all as a whole, but all things in the individuality which precedes their combination into a whole—came into being through this Word, who is God. The preposition 'through' is that by which the relation of the Second Person of the Trinity to creation is usually expressed (1 Cor. viii. 6; Col. i. 16; Heb. i. 2); as, indeed, this is the conception which belongs to the doctrine of the Logos, the Divine Word. Occasionally, however, the same language is used of the Father: see Heb. ii. 10, and comp. Rom. xi. 36.

**Vers. 3, 4. That which hath come into being was life in him.** We are led by various considerations to take this view of the passage rather than that which is presented in the Authorised Version. The Greek admits of either punctuation (and rendering), but the absence of the article before the word 'life' suggests that it is here a predicate, not the subject of the sentence. By almost all (if not all) the Greek Fathers of the first three centuries the words were thus understood; and we may reasonably, in such a case as this, attach great importance to the conclusions attained by that linguistic tact which is often most sure where it is least able to assign distinct reasons for its verdict. Further, this division of the words corresponds best with the rhythmical mode in which the earlier sentences of the Prologue are connected with one another. It is characteristic

of them to make the voice dwell mainly, in each line of the rhythm, upon a word taken from the preceding line; and this characteristic is not preserved in the case before us unless we adhere to the ancient construction. We have seen what the Word is in Himself; we are now to see Him in His relation to His creatures.

Created being was 'life in Him.' He was life, life absolutely, and therefore the life that can communicate itself,—the infinitely productive life, from whom alone came to every creature, as He called it into being, the measure of life that it possesses. In Him was the fountain of all life; and every form of life, known or unknown, was only a drop of water from the stream which, gathered up in Him before, flowed forth at His creative word to people the universe of being with the endlessly multiplied and diversified existences that play their part in it. It is not of the life of man only that John speaks, still less is it only of that spiritual and eternal life which constitutes man's true being. If the word 'life' is often used in this more limited sense in the Gospel, it is because other kinds and developments of life pass out of view in the presence of that life on which the writer especially loves to dwell. The word itself has no such limitation of meaning, and when used, as here, without anything to suggest limitation, it must be taken in its most comprehensive sense. It was in the Word, then, that all things that have life lived; the very physical world, if we can say of its movements that they are life, the vegetable world, the world of the lower animals, the world of men and angels, up to the highest angel that is before the throne. Ere yet they came into being, their life was in the Word who, as God, was life, and from the Word they received it when their actual being began. The lesson is the same as that of Col. i. 16, 17, 'In Him were all things created,' and 'in Him all things subsist;' or, still more, of Rev. iv. 11, 'Thou didst create all things, and because of Thy pleasure they *were*' (not 'are,' as in the Authorised Version), 'and they were created.'

**And the life was the light of men.** From the wide thought of all created existences, the Evangelist passes in these words to the last and greatest of the works of God, man, whose creation is recorded in the first chapter of Genesis. All creatures had 'life' in the Word; but this life was to man something more than it could be to others, because he had been created after a fashion, and placed in a sphere, peculiar to himself amidst the different orders of animated being. God said, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness' (Gen. i. 26). Man was thus capable of receiving God, and of knowing that he had received Him; he had a sphere and a capacity belonging to none of the lower creatures spoken of in the great record of creation; his nature was fitted to be the conscious abode, not of the human only, but of the divine. Hence the Word could be in him as in no other creature. But the Word is God (ver. 1), and 'God is light' (1 John i. 5). Thus the Word is 'light' (comp. ver. 7); and as man was essentially fitted to receive the Word, that Word giving life to all found in him a fitness for the highest and fullest life,—for 'light,' therefore, in its highest and fullest sense; and 'the life was the light of men.'

The idea of human nature thus set forth in these words is peculiarly remarkable, and worthy of our observation, not only as a complete answer to

those who bring a charge of Manichæan dualism against the Fourth Gospel, but also to enable us to comprehend its teaching as to human responsibility in the presence of Jesus. 'The life,' it is said, 'was the light of men;' not of a class, not of some, but of all the members of the human family as such. Man's true nature, it is said, is divine; divine in this respect also, as distinguished from the divine in all creation, that man is capable of recognising, acknowledging, *seeing* the divine in himself. The 'life' becomes 'light' in him, and it does not become so in lower creatures. Man's true life is the life of the Word; it was so originally, and he knew it to be so. If, therefore, he listens to the tempter and yields to sin (whose existence is admitted simply as a fact, no attempt being made to account for it), man corrupts his true nature, and is responsible for doing so. But his fall cannot destroy his nature, which still testifies to what his first condition was, to what his normal condition is, to what he ought to be. Man, therefore, only fulfils his original nature by again receiving that Word who is to offer Himself to him as the 'Word become flesh.' But if man's receiving of the Word be thus the fulfilling of his nature, it is his duty to receive Him; and this duty is impressed upon him by his *nature*, not by mere external authority. Hence the constant appeal of Jesus in this Gospel, not to external evidence only, but to that remaining life of the Word within us, which ought to receive the Word completely, and to hasten to the Light (comp. ver. 9).

Ver. 5. And the light shineth in the darkness. The darkness here spoken of is not an original darkness coexistent with created being (ver. 3). It belongs to the development of thought begun at ver. 4, and is coexistent only with the moral process of rejecting the Word, implied, though not expressly stated, in that verse. The Word through whom all come into being offers Himself at the same time to all as their light. Let them acknowledge and accept Him, they have life (chap. viii. 12); let them reject Him, they are in a darkness for which they are responsible, because they have chosen it. It is a fact, however, that many always did, and still do, reject the light; and thus the darkness has been and is a positively existing thing. Yet the Light has not forsaken the world. No merely present point of time is indicated; in that case John could not have immediately added the past tense, *overcame*. The idea is general. The Light, as it had existed, had shone; as it exists, it shines, always seeking to draw men into the full brightness of its beams.

And the darkness overcame it not. Such is the most probable meaning of these words, and so were they understood by the most ancient Christian writers. The verb which we have rendered 'overcame' occurs not unfrequently in the New Testament; but (when used, as here, in the active voice) it has not, and cannot have, the meaning *comprehend* (i.e. understand), which is given to it in the Authorised Version. The most important guide to the meaning is chap. xii. 35, where the same word is used, and where also the metaphor is similar: 'Walk . . . lest darkness overtake you,'—come over you, seize you. In the verse before us we read of light shining in the darkness; the darkness, ever antagonistic to the light, yet does not *overtake* or *come over* the light. The idea of *seizing*, in connection with this figure, is equivalent to

overcoming or intercepting the light. Even if 'comprehend' were possible as a translation, it would be nothing to tell us that the darkness did not *comprehend* the light. That is implied in the fact that the darkness is *self-chosen* (comp. on ver. 4). But it is much to tell us that, in the conflict between the darkness and the light, the darkness failed to overcome (or eclipse) the light. The light, though sometimes apparently overcome, was really victorious; it withstood every assault, and shone on triumphantly in a darkened world. So far, therefore, from our finding here a 'wail' (as some have said), we have a note of exultation, a token of that victory which throughout the whole Gospel rises to our view through sorrow.

We thus close what is obviously the first paragraph of the Gospel; and although it relates to the Pre-incarnate Word, and expresses the principles of His dealings in their most general form, the development of thought is precisely the same as that which the history of the Incarnate Word will be found to present. Through the Word all things have come into being. To all He offers Himself, that He may make them not only exist in Him, but, in the free appropriation of what He offers, *live* in Him. Some receive Him, and He becomes their light; others reject Him, and are immersed in the darkness which they choose. The darkness opposes and seeks to destroy the light, but the light shines on to victory.

Ver. 6. There arose a man, sent from God, whose name was John. With this verse we pass forward into the times of the Incarnate Word. The section upon which we first enter is, as compared with the second, general; hence the Incarnation is only implied, not expressly mentioned. The immediate preparation for this new period is the testimony of the Baptist; and the words with which he is introduced to us stand in striking contrast to what we have been told of the Word in ver. 1. He 'arose,'—literally, he 'came into being,' as distinguished from the 'was' of that verse. He was a man 'sent from God,' as distinguished from the Word who was 'with God.' In adding, 'his name was John,' the Evangelist (we may perhaps say) does more than identify him as the great prophet who had so powerfully impressed all classes of the people. If we remember the deep significance attached to 'name' in this Gospel, it will seem possible that the antithesis to ver. 1 is still continued. The personal name needed for identification amongst men is placed in contrast with that name by which the eternal attributes of the Son are expressed, 'the Word' (comp. ver. 12).

Ver. 7. The same came for witness, that he might bear witness concerning the Light, that all might believe through him. The impression produced by the Baptist had been great, but he had come to bear witness to One higher than himself. Here we meet for the first time with this word 'witness,' one of the characteristic words of the writings of John, occurring in various forms nearly fifty times in his Gospel, and thirty or forty times in his Epistles and the Apocalypse. The importance of the thought lies in its simplicity. The true witness declares what he has seen and heard (1 John i. 2, 3); his testimony reflects 'the truth' so far as he has received it, just as the faithful mirror reflects the light that has come upon it. John came to bear such witness concerning the Light, that through him all might be led to

'believe'—trustfully to accept that Light, and yield themselves up to its influence. The introduction of the word 'all' is very remarkable. More clearly than any other passage this verse teaches us how great were the results which the Baptist's mission was intended to produce, immeasurably greater than those which were actually realised. Had Israel been faithfully and obediently waiting for the fulfilment of the divine promise, John's witness respecting Jesus would have turned 'all' Israel (and, through Israel, 'all' men) to the Saviour. In immediate effects the work of John, like that of One higher than John, would be pronounced by men a failure. In the light of this verse we can better understand such passages as Mal. iv.; Matt. xi. 9-14; Luke vii. 29, 30.

Ver. 8. **He was not the Light, but he was that he might bear witness concerning the Light.** The thought of the greatness of the witness borne by John underlies the words of this verse. Great as the Baptist was, he was not the Light. What he *was* is not expressed, but only the purpose which he was to fulfil (comp. ver. 23). It is very possible that the words may have had a special application to the opinions which (as we learn from Acts xviii. 25, xix. 3) existed at Ephesus with regard to the mission of John.

Ver. 9. **There was the true Light, which lighteth every man, coming into the world.** This almost literal rendering of the Greek will show how it is that these simple words have been so variously explained. As in the English, so in the Greek, the word 'coming' might be joined either with 'light' or with 'man.' The punctuation we have adopted (it will be remembered that in ancient manuscripts of the original there is little or no punctuation) will show that, in our view, the last clause is to be joined, not with the second, but with the first clause of the verse. What has been said above of the general structure of the Prologue has shown that, as yet, the full presence of the Word personally come is not before us. The manifestation is in its initial stage, not yet complete. To this thought the word 'coming' exactly corresponds. But still more important in guiding to the right interpretation of the verse is the Evangelist's use of the last phrase elsewhere. The expression 'come into the world' occurs in as many as seven other passages of this Gospel (chap. iii. 19, vi. 14, ix. 39, xi. 27, xii. 46, xvi. 28, xviii. 37). In every one of these passages the words relate to the Lord Himself: sometimes they are used by the multitude (vi. 14), or by a disciple (xi. 27), as a designation of the Messiah, 'He that should come'; sometimes they are the words of Jesus or of the Evangelist, in passages which speak of the purpose of His 'coming.' In chaps. iii. 19 and xii. 46 the phrase stands in close connection with the figure which is now before us. The latter verse (chap. xii. 46) is especially noteworthy; for Jesus Himself says, 'I am come a light into the world.' If, then, we would allow the Evangelist to be his own interpreter, we seem bound to believe that he here speaks of the *light* as 'coming into the world.' If the words are joined with 'man,' they add little or nothing to the thought. 'Every man' is really as full and inclusive an expression as 'every man that cometh into the world.' Familiarity with the common rendering may prevent the reader from at once perceiving that this is true; but we are persuaded that reflection will show that by the change much is gained, nothing lost. In

the previous verse we have read that John was not 'the Light.' When he 'arose' as a witness, the true Light was in existence; it had been shining in the darkness; it was now 'coming into the world,'—about to manifest itself with a clearness and in a manner hitherto unknown.

Two more of the special terms of the Gospel meet us here, 'true' and 'world.' It is unfortunate that two different words must be represented by the same English word, 'true.' The one (used in chaps. iii. 33, v. 31, and eleven other verses of the Gospel) denotes truth in contrast with falsehood; the other, which we have before us here, expresses the real as contrasted with the phenomenal, that which is perfect and substantial as opposed to what is imperfect and shadowy, or that which is fully accomplished in contrast with the type which prefigured it. This word is, in the New Testament, almost confined to the writings of John. Of twenty-eight passages in which it occurs, nine are found in this Gospel, four in the First Epistle, ten in the Revelation. Three of the remaining five passages are (as might almost have been foreseen) in the Epistle to the Hebrews. The other examples of the word in this Gospel will be found in chaps. iv. 23, 37, vi. 32, vii. 28, viii. 16, xv. 1, xvii. 3, xix. 35, and in most of these the reader will easily trace the idea. The 'true worshippers' are those whose worship is real, not imperfect and underserving of the name; the bread which came down from heaven is 'the true bread,' that of which the manna was a type, that which ministers real and abiding nourishment. So here we read of the archetypal source of light, the light which alone is real and perfect.—This true Light was coming into the 'world.' Originally signifying the universe created and ordered by the hand of God, 'the world' came successively to mean the world of men, and the world of men as opposed to God. In this Gospel especially, we read of the world as an antagonistic power, unbelieving, evil in its works, hating and persecuting Jesus and His people,—a power over which He will be victorious, and which shall be convicted of sin and judged; but we also read of God's love to the world (chap. iii. 16), and of the gift of His Son that the world may be saved through Him. If the thought of evil and alienation is brought out in the following verse, it is most important to observe that this verse speaks of the illumination of *every man*. No man belongs to the world that is given up to darkness and impenitence, unless he, through resistance and choice of evil, have made the light that was in him to become darkness (comp. Eph. iv. 18).—We cannot doubt that in the words 'every man' there is an allusion to John ('a *man* sent from God') as himself illumined by this Light.

Ver. 10. **He was in the world, and the world came into being through him, and the world knew him not.** The subject is still the Light, which (ver. 9) was existent, and was 'coming into the world.' In the world, indeed, it was already (though the complete manifestation was yet to come), and—here the figure passes imperceptibly away, giving place to the thought of the Person—the world, though brought into being through Him, recognised not His presence. Note the simplicity of John's style, in which the three thoughts of the verse, though very various in their mutual relations, are, so to speak, placed side by side. These words relate both to the Pre-incarnate and to the Incarnate Word. The development is rather of

thought than of time. Alike before His manifestation in the flesh and after it, the Word was 'in the world.' The statement must not be limited to the manifestation of Christ in Israel. This verse is a repetition, in a more concrete form, of vers. 3-5 (in part).

Ver. 11. *He came unto his own home, and his own accepted him not.* Is this verse practically a repetition of ver. 10, in language more solemn and emphatic? Or do we here pass from the thought of the world in general to that of the Jewish people. The question is one of some difficulty. As ver. 12 is certainly quite general in its meaning, it may seem hazardous to introduce a limitation here. But the weight of argument seems on the whole to be on the other side. There is a manifest advance of thought as we pass from the last verse to this. Instead of 'He was in,' we find 'He came unto;' for 'the world,' we have 'His own home;' for 'knew' (perceived or recognised), we have 'accepted.' Every change seems to point to a more intimate relationship, a clearer manifestation, and a rejection that is still more without excuse. The Word, who was in the world (comp. Prov. viii. 31), had His home with the chosen people (Ex. xix. 5; Ps. lxxvi. 2), to which had been given the revelation of the truth of God (Rom. ix. 4). It is still mainly of the Pre-incarnate Word that John speaks. In the whole history of Israel had been illustrated unfaithfulness to the truth (comp. Luke xi. 49, 50; Acts vii. 51-53); and the tender pathos of this verse recalls the words in which Jesus speaks of the rejection of Himself (Matt. xxiii. 37).

Ver. 12. *But as many as received him, to them gave he right to become children of God, even to them that believe in his name.* We have beheld the light shining in the darkness (vers. 10, 11); the thought of this verse is, that the darkness overcame it not! As we have already seen (see note on ver. 11), the language again becomes altogether general. Whosoever 'received Him,' to whatever period of time or nation they might belong, won the gift here spoken of. There is a perceptible difference between 'accepted' (ver. 11) and 'received,' as here used. Whilst the former lays emphasis on the will that consented (or refused) to receive, the latter brings before us the possession gained; so that the full meaning is, As many as by accepting Him received Him. The gift is not directly stated as 'sonship,' perhaps because the full manifestation of this blessing belongs to the latter days alone (comp. on chaps. iii. 5, vii. 39; Rom. viii. 15), whereas the Evangelist would here include the time of incomplete revelation which came before the Incarnation. Then, as now, men accepted or refused Him; but for those who accepted was reserved 'some better thing' (Heb. xi. 40) than had yet been clearly made known to man.—We must not fail to note (for in these wonderful verses everything is significant) that there is special fitness in the expression '*children*' rather than '*sons* of God;' for, whereas 'sonship' is often spoken of in connection with mere adoption, stress is here laid on an actual (though spiritual) pater-nity. The right or authority thus to become children of God is given by the Word 'to them that believe in His name.' It is very important to discriminate between the different phrases which John uses in relation to belief or faith. On the one hand we have the simple expression 'to believe Him' (as in chaps. viii. 31, v. 38, etc.), usually de-

noting the acceptance of something said as true. On the other hand, we find very frequently in the New Testament, but especially in the writings of John, a remarkable combination of 'believe' with a preposition literally meaning 'into,' by which is denoted not merely an acceptance of words or professions, but such an acceptance of the Person trusted, such an approach of the heart towards Him, as leads to union with Him. This peculiarly Christian formula is by some rendered 'believe in,' by others 'believe on.' Both renderings are found in the Authorised Version. We have uniformly adopted the former, because it most clearly indicates the *union* towards which the faith tends.—There are a few passages (see the marginal references) in which, as here, this phrase 'believe in' is followed by 'the name.' We have already seen with what fullness of meaning John uses the word 'name.' As in many passages of the Old Testament, the 'name' expresses the sum of the qualities which mark the nature or character of a person (comp. Ex. xxxiv. 5, 6). It is hard to fix the precise distinction between 'believing in Him' and 'believing in His name.' Perhaps we may say that, in the former case, the believer trustfully yields himself up to the Person, in the latter, to the revelation of the Person. Those who in chap. ii. 23 are spoken of as believing 'in the name' of Jesus, had not reached the personal union which believing in Jesus implies; but through their trustful acceptance of His revelation of Himself, the higher gift, the closer knowledge, might soon be gained. Here the 'name' cannot but recall ver. 1: the 'name' *Word* expressed the nature of the Person (comp. ver. 6).

Ver. 13. *Which were begotten, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.* The spiritual history of those who are spoken of in ver. 12 is here continued, and the nature of their sonship more fully defined. It is easy to see that in the three clauses there is a distinct progress of thought, the second (containing the thought of 'will') being more definite than the first, the third (in which 'man' is substituted for 'flesh,'—a person for human nature in general) being again more definite than the second. The three clauses, however, really express but one main idea; what that is must be learnt from the contrast in the closing words,—'but (they were begotten) of God.' These believers have received the right to become 'children of God' by virtue of a true spiritual filiation, being begotten of God. The contrast to such a sonship is the very claim which is so strongly made by the Jews in chap. viii., and the validity of which our Lord altogether denies. The recollection of that chapter, which only brings into bold relief the habitual assumption of the Judaism of that day, will be sufficient to explain the remarkable emphasis of this verse, the threefold denial that men become children of God by virtue of any natural hereditary descent.—Although it is the claim of the Jews that is here in the writer's thought, yet, as often elsewhere, the Jews are the type of the world at large; by others besides Jews like presumptuous claims have been made, others have rested in the 'divinity' of their race. It is very possible that the peculiarity of the first clause (literally 'not of bloods') may be thus explained.

Ver. 14. *And the Word became flesh.* With this verse we enter upon the fuller and more concrete aspect of the Word appearing among men.



As personally come in the flesh, however, the Word contrasts with what He was in His pre-existent state; and hence, before we have the Baptist introduced to us, we have statements exactly parallel to those of vers. 1-5. That now before us corresponds to ver. 1, for the Incarnate Word in Himself is here spoken of. He who was in the beginning, who was with God, who was God, 'became flesh'; did not merely take to Him a human body, did not merely become an individual man, but assumed *human nature* in its entirety (see chaps. xii. 27, 'soul'; xiii. 21, 'spirit'), identified Himself with the race, entered into such a condition that He could have perfect communion and fellowship with us, and we with Him. The word 'became' does not denote that His divine nature was laid aside, and that His mode of being was simply human until, in the accomplishment of His work, He gradually transformed His human mode of being and regained for it all the glory of the divine. Were such a view correct, it would follow that when the divine was regained the human was laid aside, and that the humanity of the exalted Redeemer is not now as real as it was during His earthly course. No such thought is suggested by 'became'; for this word does not imply that the former state of being exists no longer. What is really indicated is the passing into a new state,—a transition rather than a transformation. The Word remains, with all His essential properties; there is added a new mode of being, the assumption of a new nature, denoted by 'flesh.' The most important parallels to this verse are 1 John iv. 2 and 2 John 7; these passages differ from the present in that the historical name 'Jesus Christ' is substituted for the Word, and that for the mysterious words 'became flesh' we read 'hath come' (or 'cometh') 'in flesh.'

And he set his tabernacle among us, and we beheld his glory (glory as of an only begotten from a father),—full of grace and truth. As the first clause of this verse corresponded to ver. 1, so these clauses correspond to vers. 2-5; only that, whereas there we had those properties of the Word in virtue of which He gives life and light in their most general form to all, here we have those in virtue of which, as the now completed revelation of the Father, He carries this life and light onward to perfection in such as truly receive Him. Still, however, it is the glory of the Word in Himself that is before us; if men are introduced in the words which follow as beholders of His glory, it is that our thought may rest, not on the blessing man thus receives (that is expressed below, vers. 16-18), but on the witness borne to the glory of the Incarnate Word. The figure of this verse is taken from the Old Testament (Lev. xxvi. 11; Ezek. xxxvii. 27, etc.); the Tabernacle was the meeting-place of God and Israel, the house in which Jehovah dwelt in the midst of his people. With the image of a tent or tabernacle is often associated the thought of transitoriness; but that the word used here does not necessarily carry with it this thought is sufficiently proved by the language of the final promise, 'The tabernacle of God is with men, and He shall set His tabernacle with them' (Rev. xxi. 3). As the Shechinah dwelt in the Tabernacle, in the midst of the camp of Israel, so 'the Word become flesh' dwelt 'among us.' Some have taken the last words to mean 'in us,' and to contain a new reference to the assumption of human nature; but this view

seems plainly inconsistent with the words which follow, 'we beheld His glory,' the meaning of which is fixed by the opening passage in the First Epistle (1 John i. 1-3). The glory was like that of an only son sent from a father; no image but this, it has been well said, 'can express the twofold character of the glory, as at once derivative and on a level with its source.' In the only son are concentrated all the characteristics of the father; on him all the father's love is poured; to him belongs the whole inheritance; on him the father, when he sends him forth on an embassy, bestows all the plenitude of his power. The translation we have given is, we believe, that which the Greek words absolutely demand; it appears to us, moreover, to be the only rendering that gives meaning to the word of comparison 'as,' or preserves the progress of the Evangelist's thought. As yet there has been no word bringing in the thought of Divine Sonship. The attributes and working of the Divine Word have been continually before us; here the glory of the Word become flesh is compared with that of an only son sent from a father; but it is not until ver. 18 that these elements are combined into one supreme utterance of truth. The last words of the verse must be connected with the subject of the sentence: 'He (the Word) set His tabernacle among us, full of grace and truth.' They go far towards explaining the 'glory' which the disciples 'beheld.' That the Word has been from the beginning of the world's history the bestower of 'grace and truth,' is implied in the imagery of the earlier verses (vers. 4, 9); that which has been involved in the teaching respecting the Pre-incarnate Word is clearly stated here of the Word become flesh. But this fullness of grace and truth does not exhaust the meaning of the 'glory.' In the glory of the Incarnate Word there are two elements, as His one Person unites two natures: in part the glory is unique (in kind and not only in degree), belonging to the God-man and not to the perfect Man; in part it is communicable to men, as Jesus Himself says, 'The glory which Thou gavest me I have given them.'

Ver. 15. John beareth witness concerning him, and hath cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me has become before me, because he was before me. We have seen that ver. 14 is parallel to vers. 1-5. In like manner this verse is parallel to vers. 6-8; but it is also an advance upon those verses, containing the Baptist's witness to the Personal Word become flesh, not to the Word as the general Light of men.—'Beareth witness,'—not 'bare witness' (ver. 32). It is as if the Evangelist would say, Of this John is the witness; his testimony abides, unchanging, always present. The same thought comes out more distinctly still in the verb which follows, 'hath cried.' (The usual translation 'crieth' seems on various grounds less probable.) The loud cry of the faithful witness has come down through all the years; we seem to hear its echoes still. The Baptist clearly refers to witness which he had borne after Jesus appeared; hence the words, 'This was he.'—It is unusually difficult to find a rendering that will fully convey the meaning of this verse. As the word 'before' occurs in two members of the verse, the English reader inevitably considers the contrast to be between 'is preferred' (or 'is become') and 'he was.' In reality, 'before' here answers to

two different words. A literal translation will show at once the meaning and the difficulty of finding an easy expression of the meaning: 'He that cometh behind me has become in front of me, because He was before me.' Jesus came 'after' or 'behind' John, as coming later in His manifestation to the world. As the later in time, it might have been expected that He would take rank after him who was His predecessor; but He has been advanced before John; the reason of this is given in John's declaration, 'He was before me.' That which these words directly affirm is priority of time; but, as in respect of human birth this could not be affirmed of Jesus, the words bring into view a pre-existence so transcendent as of itself to assert an infinite superiority to every other man. This anterior dignity explains why He that followed John has come to be before him. The herald came first, to prepare the way for the King; when the King arrives, the herald retires from view.—The last words of the verse require further notice. They are not fully represented by 'before me,' as if they contained nothing beyond a comparison of Jesus with the Baptist. The former word is absolute, 'He was first'; the other word is added because a comparison is needed, 'first in regard of me.' We might almost paraphrase the very remarkable combination thus: First, and (by consequence) before me.

Ver. 16. *Because out of his fulness we all received, and grace for grace.* In order to understand this verse, and especially the very difficult word 'because,' with which the true reading of the verse begins, we must look at the structure of the whole passage. Along with vers. 17 and 18, this verse is parallel to vers. 9-13; and ver. 14, as we have seen, answers to vers. 1-5. The last verse in like manner stands related to vers. 6-8; and, as these verses are introduced between ver. 5 and ver. 9,—which might be read continuously, the subject remaining the same,—so is ver. 15 almost parenthetical, bringing in (as in the earlier verses) the witness of John before the statement of the results following the manifestation of the Word. The words 'we all received' and 'His fulness' are sufficient to show that the verse is a continuation of the thought of ver. 14, and belongs to the Evangelist, not to the Baptist. If, then, ver. 15 is parenthetical, the present verse is naturally introduced by the word 'because.' We have here an illustration of the extreme importance which John attaches to Christian *experience*. In ver. 9 we have had the *fact* of what the Word bestows. Here we have more. We have the *answer* of Christian experience to the fact. We have not merely the light lightening, but the light appropriated, its value appreciated, its power felt. Verse 14 had not described Christian experience. The word 'beheld' there used had only assumed it (see the comment), and had mentioned the witness which it gave. Now we have the description itself: hence the 'because.' We beheld the glory of the Word become flesh, and are able to speak of that glory, 'because out of His fulness,' etc. The last stage of the Prologue is thus reached, because the highest point of thought is attained. No more can be said when the appropriation of the Word is complete.

The fulness spoken of is that of grace and truth, which so reside in the Incarnate Word that nothing more can be added. It is an absolute, not a comparative fulness,—a proof again that no part of

that fulness is to be won back in the progress of the Messianic work. That fulness resides in the 'Word become flesh,' as such. 'Out of' it 'we all'—believers, who beheld His glory, among whom He set His tabernacle—received. The thing is past. We received Him (ver. 12). When we received Him, He communicated Himself to us. His fulness, so far as we could receive it, was made ours. Hence it is not said *what* we received; because it was not a gift bestowed by His fulness, but the measure of that fulness itself which we were capable of receiving.

We are thus led also to the clear meaning of the last clause of the verse, 'and grace for grace.' Not exactly 'grace upon grace,' as if the meaning were successive measures of grace, one added to another; but grace given in fresh measure as each preceding measure has been improved, the 'fulness' constantly more and more made ours until we 'are fulfilled unto all the fulness of God' (Eph. iii. 19). It is Christian experience again.

Ver. 17. *Because the law was given through Moses: grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.* It is very possible that this verse should be taken as directly parallel to ver. 11; hence the definite reference to the pre-Christian revelation here (see note on ver. 11). The thought of Christian experience again explains the connection of this verse with the preceding. The law is not undervalued. It was divine. It was a gift of God. It was a gift through the great Lawgiver of whom Israel was proud. But it was a fixed unalterable thing, with definite boundaries, not stretching out into the illimitable and eternal. It could not express unbounded grace and truth, unbounded love, because in its very nature law has limits which it cannot pass. Now, however, there has 'come' (a far higher word than 'was given') a fulness of grace and truth, within which we stand, and which we are to appropriate more and more,—vast, illimitable, as is that God who is love. Hence, therefore, the *experience* of ver. 16 is possible.—It will be noted that the two thoughts of this verse are placed side by side (see ver. 10), though in reality the first is subordinate to the second.

And now comes in the great Name as yet unnamed, but named now in all the universality of its application, the Name which embraces historical Christianity in its whole extent as the religion both of Jew and Gentile, the religion of man,—the name which, in its one half ('Jesus,' Joshua, Jehoshua, 'Jehovah is Salvation') expresses the purpose of all God's dealings with man, and in its other half ('Christ') the Divine consecration of the Redeemer to His work.—The verbs of this verse are used with great propriety, —'was given' of what was incidental in origin and temporary in duration; 'came' (literally, 'became') of what, though revealed in time, was an eternal reality.

One reflection alone remains, and then the Prologue may close.

Ver. 18. *No one hath seen God at any time; One who is only begotten God, he that is in the bosom of the Father, he declared him.* It is not possible in a commentary such as this to defend the reading which we here adopt, 'God' instead of 'Son.' But the passage is so extremely important that we may be permitted for once to depart from our usual practice of not referring to other writers, and to commend to our readers one of the finest critical Dissertations ever published

in any language upon a reading of the New Testament. We refer to that by Dr. Hort of Cambridge upon this text (Macmillan, 1876). We add only that by thus reading we preserve an important characteristic of the structural principles of our Evangelist, that which leads him at the close of a section or a period to return to its beginning. The word 'God' here corresponds to 'God' in ver. 1.

'No one hath seen God at any time.' The contrast is to 'we beheld' in ver. 14, and the words describe God in His nature as God; He dwelleth in light that is inaccessible. The soul longs to see Him, but this cannot be. Is then its longing vain, its cry unheard? The Evangelist answers, No. One has 'declared' Him, has, as the Word, unfolded and explained Him. And the glorious fitness of the Word to do this is pointed out in three particulars, all showing how fitly He could do that which none other could do. (1) He is 'only begotten,' Son among all other sons in His own peculiar sense, who is fully able to represent the Father, to whom all the perfections of the Father flow. (2) He is God—not only Son, but, as Son, God,—Himself divine, not in a metaphorical sense, but possessing all the attributes of true and real divinity. (3) It is He who 'is in the bosom of the Father.' The climax of thought, and the consideration that here are mentioned the conditions which make it possible for Jesus to be the complete Interpreter of the Father, preclude our taking these words as referring to the state which succeeded the resurrection and ascension,—in the sense, 'He that hath returned to the bosom of the Father.' He of whom the Evangelist speaks is more than 'only begotten,' more than 'God.' He is 'in the bosom of the Father.' In Him God is revealed as a Father; without Him He can be revealed only as God. The words thus include more than 'with God' in ver. 1, more than the Divine self-

communion, the communion of God with God. The fatherly element, the element of love, is here. Out of that element of love, or of grace and truth, the Son comes; into it He returns. It is of the very essence of His being so to do. He did so from eternity. He did so in time. He shall do it in the eternity to come. Not less does it belong to the profoundest depths of His nature to do so, than to be 'only begotten,' to be 'God.' Therefore is He fully qualified to declare the Father, whom to know as thus made known in Jesus Christ (ver. 17) is that 'eternal life' after which the heart of man feels, and in the possession of which alone is it completely blessed (comp. xvii. 3, xx. 31).

One remark has still to be made upon a point which may seem at first sight to interfere with the correctness of that view of the structure of the Prologue which (as we have seen) is not only a matter of interest, but also a guide in the interpretation. There is no mention of the *rejection* of the Word in vers. 14-18. But this fact when rightly considered rather confirms what has been said. It illustrates that *progress* which in this Gospel always accompanies parallelism.

In vers. 1-5, the first section of the Prologue, we have seen that rejection is implied.

In vers. 6-13, the second section, it is fully brought out.

In vers. 14-18, the third section, it is overcome.

Thus also, taking the Gospel as a whole, it is implied in the section immediately preceding the Conflict (chaps. ii. 12-iv. 54). It is fully brought out in the section of Conflict (chaps. v. 1-xii. 50). It is overcome in the section following (chaps. xiii. 1-xvii. 26).

How unique, how wonderful is the plan of the Gospel! How much light does the whole cast upon each part, how much each part upon the whole!

## CHAPTER I. 19-34.

### *The Witness of the Baptist to Jesus.*

- 19 **A**ND this is the "record" of John, when the Jews sent<sup>a</sup> a Ver. 7 :  
priests and Levites from Jerusalem<sup>b</sup> to ask him, Who chap. v. 33.  
20 art thou? And he<sup>c</sup> confessed, and denied not; but<sup>d</sup> confessed, <sup>b</sup> Matt. iii. 11 :  
21 I am not the Christ. And they asked him, What then? Art chap. iii. 28 :  
thou 'Elias'?<sup>e</sup> And he saith, I am not. Art thou<sup>d</sup> that<sup>e</sup> <sup>Acts xiii. 25.</sup>  
22 prophet? And he answered, No. Then said they<sup>f</sup> unto him, <sup>c</sup> Mal. iv. 5.  
Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent <sup>See Matt. xi.</sup>  
23 us. What sayest thou of thyself? 'He said, I *am* the<sup>g</sup> voice <sup>d</sup> See chap. vi.  
of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the <sup>14.</sup>  
24 Lord, as<sup>h</sup> said the prophet Esaias.<sup>g</sup> And they which were sent <sup>e</sup> Matt. iii. 3.  
<sup>h</sup> Isa. xl. 3.

<sup>1</sup> witness

<sup>2</sup> omit from Jerusalem

<sup>3</sup> the

<sup>4</sup> sent unto him from Jerusalem

<sup>5</sup> And he

<sup>6</sup> They said therefore

<sup>a</sup>

<sup>b</sup> Elijah

<sup>c</sup> Isaiah

25 were of the Pharisees.<sup>10</sup> And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that<sup>11</sup> Christ,  
26 nor Elias,<sup>5</sup> neither that<sup>12</sup> prophet? John answered them, saying, 'I baptize with water: but there standeth one among you,  
27 whom ye know not;<sup>13</sup> <sup>14</sup> He it is, who<sup>14</sup> coming after me is preferred before me,<sup>15</sup> whose shoe's latchet<sup>16</sup> I am not worthy  
28 to unloose. These things were done 'in Bethabara<sup>17</sup> beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing.  
29 The next day John<sup>18</sup> seeth Jcsus coming unto him, and saith, Behold<sup>19</sup> the <sup>20</sup> Lamb of God, 'which taketh away the sin  
30 of <sup>21</sup> the world. <sup>22</sup> This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for<sup>20</sup> he was before me.  
31 And I knew him not: but that he should<sup>21</sup> be made manifest to Israel, 'therefore am I come<sup>22</sup> baptizing with<sup>23</sup> water.  
32 <sup>24</sup> And John bare record,<sup>24</sup> saying, I saw<sup>25</sup> the Spirit descending  
33 from heaven like a dove,<sup>26</sup> and it abode upon him. And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with<sup>23</sup> water, the same said<sup>27</sup> unto me, Upon whom<sup>28</sup> thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on<sup>29</sup> him, 'the same is he  
34 which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.<sup>30</sup> And I saw, and bare record<sup>31</sup> that this is the <sup>32</sup> Son of God.

<sup>10</sup> Matt. iii. 11.  
<sup>11</sup> Ver. 15, 30;  
chap. iii. 30;  
31; Acts  
xix. 4.  
<sup>12</sup> Chaps. iii. 26  
27, 40.  
<sup>13</sup> Ver. 36;  
Ex. xii. 3;  
Isa. liii. 7;  
Acts viii. 32;  
1 Pet. i. 17;  
Rev. v. 6,  
etc.  
<sup>14</sup> 1 John iii. 5.  
Comp. Isa.  
liii. 11; Heb.  
i. 3, ix. 28;  
1 Pet. ii. 24,  
iii. 18;  
1 John i. 7,  
ii. 2, iv. 10;  
Rev. i. 5.  
<sup>15</sup> Chap. iii. 16,  
17, iv. 42,  
vi. 33, 51,  
viii. 12, ix.  
5, xii. 46, 47,  
xvi. 8, xvii.  
21, 23.  
<sup>16</sup> Ver. 15, 27.  
<sup>17</sup> Ver. 7;  
Luke i. 76,  
77.  
<sup>18</sup> Matt. iii. 16;  
chap. v. 33.  
<sup>19</sup> Matt. iii. 11.  
<sup>20</sup> Matt. iii. 17.  
See ver. 49.

<sup>10</sup> And some from among the Pharisees had been sent  
<sup>11</sup> art not the <sup>12</sup> nor the  
<sup>13</sup> in water: in the midst of you standeth one whom ye know not,  
<sup>14</sup> omit He it is who <sup>15</sup> omit is preferred before me.  
<sup>16</sup> the latchet of whose sandal <sup>17</sup> Bethany  
<sup>18</sup> he <sup>19</sup> Behold, <sup>20</sup> is become before me, because  
<sup>21</sup> may <sup>22</sup> therefore came I <sup>23</sup> in <sup>24</sup> witness  
<sup>25</sup> I have beheld <sup>26</sup> descending as a dove out of heaven  
<sup>27</sup> he said <sup>28</sup> whomsoever <sup>29</sup> abiding upon  
<sup>30</sup> the Holy Spirit <sup>31</sup> And I have seen and have borne witness

CONTENTS. We enter here upon the second great division of the Gospel, extending from i. 19 to ii. 11, and containing the presentation of Jesus, as He takes His place in the field of human history and, alike in the witness borne to Him by the Baptist and in His manifestation of Himself to His disciples, shows us what He is. When we know Him we shall be prepared to follow Him, as He enters upon and accomplishes His work in the world. That work in the proper sense of the word does not yet begin. The first section of this division extends from i. 19 to i. 34, and contains the witness of the Baptist. The subordinate parts of this section are—(1) vers. 19-28, the witness by the Baptist on the first day spoken of; (2) vers. 29-34, His witness on the second day.  
Ver. 19. And this is the witness of John, when the Jews sent unto him from Jerusalem priests and Levites to ask him, Who art thou? The preceding verses (1-18) are so strongly marked in character, and so distinctly constitute one coherent whole, that we cannot but place them in a section by themselves. And yet they do not form a distinct preface to the book (such, for example, as we find in Luke i. 1-4), for the first

word of the present verse (with which the regular narrative commences) shows that this section must be connected with what goes before. It is possible that this connection is really very close. The words 'this is the witness of John' do not necessarily mean 'this witness which follows is the witness of John'; the Evangelist's ordinary usage in similar cases suggests that the sense intended is rather, 'And of this kind—confirmatory of the preceding statements—is the witness,' etc. Such an interpretation best accounts for the use of the present tense, 'this is' (comp. ver. 15), standing in striking contrast to the past tenses which immediately follow; it also throws light on the remarkably emphatic words which form the first half of ver. 20. Thus viewed, the present section attaches itself to ver. 15; what is there given in a general form is now related with greater fulness, in connection with the circumstances of the history. The 'witness' directly intended is that of vers. 19-27; but we must also include the very important testimony borne on the following day, especially that of vers. 33, 34, which presents (in a different form) some of the leading truths of the Prologue.—As in the earlier Gospels, the

mission of Jesus is introduced by the Baptist; the peculiarity of John's narrative consists in this, that the Baptist's testimony is obtained in answer to a question asked by 'the Jews,' who send a deputation to him 'from Jerusalem,' the centre of the theocracy.

In this mention of 'the Jews' we meet for the first time with one of the most characteristic terms of the Fourth Gospel. In the other Gospels the expression occurs only fifteen or sixteen times, and twelve of these instances are examples of a single phrase, 'King of the Jews,' and that phrase used by Gentiles. The remaining passages are Mark vii. 3; Luke vii. 3, xxiii. 51; and Matt. xxviii. 15 (slightly different from the rest in the absence of the article). In this Gospel—in addition to six examples of the title 'King of the Jews,' used as in the other Gospels—we find more than fifty passages in which the Evangelist himself (not quoting from any Gentile) speaks of 'the Jews.' Had the author of this Gospel been a Gentile, this usage might have seemed very natural; but it is no less natural in the case of a writer who, though a Jew by birth, has long been severed from his countrymen through their rejection of his Lord. The leaders and representatives of the nation in this rejection of Jesus are those whom John usually designates as 'the Jews.' When the other Gospels speak of opposition on the part of Pharisees, chief priests, elders, scribes, Sadducees, or lawyers, John (who mentions none of these classes except Pharisees and chief priests, and these not very frequently) is wont to use this general term. The mass of the people, the led as contrasted with the leaders, he speaks of as 'the multitude' or 'the multitudes.' Hence in most of the passages in which we meet with 'the Jews,' we must understand the party possessed of greatest influence in the nation, the representatives of Judaism, the leaders in opposition to Jesus. Even where the term is used in a wider sense, it does not simply designate the nation; when employed by the Evangelist himself, it almost always bears with it the impress of one thought—that of general unfaithfulness, of a national depravation which culminated in the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus.

There is nothing to indicate that the deputation here spoken of was sent by the Sanhedrin; but it appears to have been formal and important, composed as it was of persons belonging to the two classes which, in the Old Testament, represent the service of the Temple (Josh. iii. 3; 2 Chron. xxx. 27; Ezek. xlv. 15). If we add to this the fact that, as appears from ver. 24, Pharisees also were present, the striking character of the scene before us will be manifest. On the one side is the Baptist, standing alone in the startling strangeness of his prophetic mission; on the other are all who either possessed or had assumed religious authority in Israel—the Jews, the priests, the Levites, and the Pharisees. The question, 'Who art thou?' has reference to the supposed personal claims of the Baptist. Might it not be that one who had so suddenly appeared in the wilderness, and who had produced so profound an effect upon all classes, was the very Messiah anxiously waited for at this time? Compare Luke iii. 15.

Ver. 20. **And he confessed and denied not. And he confessed, I am not the Christ.** The answer of the Baptist is reported with great solemnity. The effect of the double statement,

'he confessed and denied not' (comp. ver. 3; 1 John ii. 4, 27) is to give peculiar impressiveness to the words: St. John thus brings into relief the single-minded faithfulness of the Baptist, and at the same time corrects mistaken opinions as to the character of his mission (see note on ver. 8). In the reply itself the first word is strongly emphatic, 'It is not I who am the Christ.' The Baptist thus prepares the way for the further statements which he is to make with the view of guiding his hearers to that Christ who is come, and whom with gradually increasing clearness he is to proclaim.

Ver. 21. **And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elijah? And he saith, I am not.** The question was a natural one, for the thought of the coming of Elijah was intimately associated with that of the coming of Messiah (Mal. iv. 5). The answer seems less natural, for our Lord, when He spoke of the Baptist, described him as 'Elijah which was for to come' (Matt. xi. 14). It is possible that even the Baptist himself did not know that he was 'Elijah' in this latter sense, and hence could reply without hesitation that he is not that prophet.

**Art thou the prophet? And he answered, No.** A third supposition is tried. Is he 'the prophet'? A comparison of i. 25 and vii. 40, 41, with vi. 14, 15, seems to lead to the conclusion that there were at this time two currents of opinion with regard to the coming prophet (Deut. xviii. 15), the one distinguishing him from the Messiah, the other maintaining that the two characters would be united in 'him that should come.' But that a prophet would certainly appear at the opening of the Messianic age was expected by all. Hence the question, as now put, covered the only other supposition that could explain the important position which the Baptist had assumed, and which appeared to indicate that he was introducing a new era. But the main point with the Baptist is to show that, strictly speaking, he is simply the herald of that era. He is only to prepare the way for Him in whom it both begins and is completed (comp. Matt. xi. 11-13). The new supposition is accordingly repudiated in terms as emphatic as before.

Ver. 22. **They said therefore unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself?** The Baptist has disowned the three suppositions that have been made. He is not 'the Christ,' not 'Elijah,' not 'the prophet.' The deputation now appeal directly to himself to state who he is.

Ver. 23. **He said, I am a voice of one crying in the wilderness. Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Isaiah.** The words are from Isa. xl. 3, and, though slightly modified in form, they completely express the sense of the original passage. To captive Israel, whose warfare is now accomplished, whose iniquity is pardoned, the glorious approach of her Deliverer is proclaimed. He comes to lead back his people through the desert to their own land. The herald's voice sounds in the desert, announcing the coming of the King, commanding that all obstacles be removed from the course of His triumphal march, and that through the wilderness there be made a highway for the Deliverer and for the people whom He has set free. The Baptist takes the words in their true application to the Messianic deliverance and kingdom. He speaks of himself as the herald, or rather as the herald's voice; as in ver. 8, his personality, so to speak, is

swallowed up in the message which he came to bring.

Ver. 24. And some from among the Pharisees had been sent. We cannot doubt that these words are introduced to lead on to the following statement, rather than to give completeness to the account of the preceding verses. It is not necessary, however, to think of a second and entirely new deputation. The persons now introduced may have formed part of the first body of questioners. But the point of special interest to them is that which meets us in ver. 25, rather than that already spoken of. They were Pharisees, and the Pharisees considered themselves the guardians of the ordinances of religious worship amongst their countrymen. Hence the significance of the statements in iv. 1, ix. 13-15, xii. 42; and also of the question which is now addressed to the Baptist. That question does not necessarily indicate a hostile bearing towards him; nor during the earlier part of the life of Jesus do the Pharisees in general appear to have opposed the Saviour in the same manner as the 'Jews' (comp. on iii. 1, vii. 32).

Ver. 25. And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptizest thou then, if thou art not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the prophet? The 'Jews,' the representatives of the theocratic spirit of the people, had been mainly concerned about the position of the Baptist in relation to the national hopes. Could it be that he was about to assume the government of the nation, and to lead it to victory? The Pharisees concern themselves more about the rite administered by the Baptist. It is the baptism of persons belonging to the chosen people that startles them. They might have viewed his baptism without surprise had he invited to it those only who were beyond the pale of Israel. But that one who, by his own confession, was neither the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the prophet, should thus administer a rite symbolical of cleansing to those who, as Jews, were already clean, this it was that threw them into perplexity.—On the significance of John's baptism, see notes on chap. iii. 5 and Matt. iii. 6.

Ver. 26, 27. John answered them, saying, I baptize in water. The meaning of the Baptist's answer has been greatly obscured by the insertion of 'but' after these words. It has thus been supposed that the object of the Baptist is to depreciate his baptism by bringing it into comparison with the baptism in the Spirit administered by Jesus. The two baptisms, however, are not as yet compared with one another. What John depreciated was himself, not the rite which he administered; and at ver. 31 he expressly magnifies his baptism, and points out its high prophetic significance. From this last-mentioned verse the import of the present clause must be determined. Even now John means, I baptize in water that I may call attention to Him whose way I am commissioned to prepare. For this purpose I am 'a voice of one that crieth;' for this purpose also 'I baptize in water.'—In the midst of you standeth one whom ye know not, coming after me, the latchet of whose sandal I am not worthy to unloose. Now follows the great fact explanatory of all this divine work of preparation, that the One waited for is come. Three stages of His manifestation, however, are to be marked; and as yet we have only reached the first, 'He standeth in the midst of you.' So standing, He is distinguished by three characteristics: (1) 'Ye

know' Him 'not,'—the 'ye' being emphatic, ye to whom He would gladly reveal Himself: (2) He cometh 'after me' (see ver. 15): (3) His glory is so great that the Baptist is not worthy to unloose the latchet of His sandal. On the last words see note on Mark i. 7.

Such is the first testimony of the Baptist to Jesus. The fuller testimonies have yet to come. At this point, therefore, the narrative pauses to tell us that this testimony was given at the very place where the Baptist was at the moment making so profound an impression upon the people.

Ver. 28. These things were done in Bethany beyond Jordan. There can be no doubt that Bethabara is not the true reading in this verse. Origen, writing in the third century, states that he found *Bethany* in almost all copies of the Gospel. This statement is decisive. It cannot be set aside, nor indeed is it even lessened in weight, by the fact that Origen himself, owing to his inability to identify Bethany, believed Bethabara to be the place intended. The existence of another Bethany, near Jerusalem, presents no difficulty, as it was not uncommon for two places to bear the same name. The instances of Bethsaida (Luke ix. 10; Mark vi. 45), Carmel, Caesarea, etc., are well known. It is even possible that the two names, though alike written Bethania in Greek, may in their original Hebrew form have been different words; just as, for instance, the 'Abe. of Gen. iv. 2 is altogether different in actual form from the 'Abel' of 2 Sam. xx. 14. This Bethany may have been small and unimportant; Bethabara, on the other hand, seems to have been so well known, that the addition of the words 'beyond Jordan' would have been less natural. Of the situation of Bethany we know no more than we are told in this verse (comp. chap. ii. 1). It has been variously placed,—near Jericho, near Scythopolis (a few miles south of the Sea of Galilee), and by one recent writer, Caspari, a little to the north of that sea. The last opinion seems the least probable of the three.

The second testimony of the Baptist is now presented to us.

Ver. 29. The next day he seeth Jesus coming unto him. The 'day' is that immediately following the day of the first testimony, and the climactic arrangement of the narrative is already perceptible. Already Jesus is in a different position. On the previous day He was spoken of as 'coming after' John; now He is 'coming unto' him. Then He stood unknown, unrecognised, amidst the throng; now He is expressly pointed out by His forerunner. Then it was His elevation above John that was expressed; now it is the greatness of His work in itself.—And saith, Behold, the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. The translation of this clause has been disputed (see the margin of the Authorised Version), but without good reason. The idea of 'talking' or 'bearing' sin is indeed of very common occurrence in the Old Testament; but it is not expressed by the word here used, which denotes *taking away, removal*. In meaning, however, the two renderings would almost coincide, since the metaphor of the verse is sacrificial: in the thought of *bearing* sin as an atoning sacrifice is involved the *removal* of the punishment deserved and of the sin itself. There is only one other passage of the New Testament in which this expression is found, 1 John iii. 5, and there the meaning is very clear.

A much more difficult question remains: What is the Baptist's meaning when he speaks of '*the Lamb of God*'? The answer which perhaps now finds most favour with commentators is, that this particular image was directly suggested to his mind by the memorable prophecy of Isa. liii., in one verse of which (ver. 7) there is an allusion to 'a lamb.' But there are serious difficulties in the way of this explanation. A reference to the chapter will show that in that verse the prophet speaks of the 'lamb' as an example of uncomplaining patience, and not in connection with taking away sin. 'He was oppressed, although he submitted himself, and opened not his mouth; as a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and as a sheep dumb before her shearers; and he opened not his mouth.' Again, had the prophecy of this chapter been definitely the source of the Baptist's words, we might surely have looked for some close resemblances of language. But such coincidences are not to be found in any part of the chapter: the ideas of taking and bearing sin are prominent, but they are expressed by words altogether different from that here used. If we are thus obliged to look away from Isaiah's great prophecy of Messiah, we naturally turn to the Mosaic ritual of sacrifice. Again we are met by difficulties. It would seem impossible to bring in here the thought of any other than the *sin-offering*, and yet it was only occasionally, and almost as an exception, that a sin-offering consisted of a lamb (Lev. iv. 32). The lamb of the morning and evening sacrifices was a burnt-offering. There remain only two other explanations of the phrase. It is just possible that 'the lamb' merely indicates a sacrificial victim, the gentleness and harmlessness of this animal making it especially suitable as a type. It is, however, much more probable that the Baptist spoke of the *paschal lamb*. The peculiar definiteness of the expression ('*the Lamb of God*') will in this case need no explanation: no thought was more familiar to the Israelite than that of the lamb for the Passover; and, we may add, few thoughts are brought out in this Gospel with greater distinctness than the relation of the Lord Jesus to the paschal sacrifice and feast (see notes on chaps. vi. and xix.). As the institution of the Passover preceded the general Mosaic legislation, its laws and arrangements lie without the circle of the ordinary ritual of sacrifices, and combine ideas which were otherwise kept distinct. The paschal supper resembles the peace-offerings, the characteristic of which was the sacred feast that succeeded the presentation of the victim (Lev. vii. 15),—an emblem of the fellowship between the accepted worshipper and his God. But the sin-offering also is included, as a reference to the original institution of the Passover will at once show. The careful sprinkling of the blood upon the door-posts was intended to be more than a sign to the destroying angel whom to spare. The lamb was slain and the blood sprinkled that atonement might be made for sin: when Israel is consecrated anew to God, the sin and the deserved punishment removed, the sacred feast is celebrated. It has been suggested that the nearness of the Passover (see chap. ii. 13) may have presented these thoughts to the Baptist's mind. It is still more likely that one who was enabled so clearly to discern the meaning of the Old Testament as to recognise the removal of '*the sin of the world*' as the object of Messiah's coming, would see from the first how fitly that ordinance, in which Israel's redemption began,

associated itself with the approaching redemption of the world. It is the world's Passover, both the sacrifice and the feast, that John sees to be at hand. With this verse compare especially I Pet. i. 18, 19; Rev. v. 6, 9. The marginal references will show to what an extent this Gospel is pervaded by the thought of '*the world*' as the object of Christ's saving work.

Ver. 30. See the note upon ver. 15. Here, as there, the words refer to testimony given by the Baptist to Jesus at some point of time and on some occasion not recorded.

Ver. 31. **And I knew him not: but that he may be made manifest to Israel, therefore came I, baptizing in water.** The explanation of the first clause of this verse will be best given when we come to ver. 33. The object which the Baptist here assigns for his work of baptizing may at first sight seem to be different from that mentioned in the earlier Gospels, where he is spoken of as sent to prepare the way of the Lord. Attention to the words used by John will remove all difficulty. '*Israel*' is not to be limited to the Jewish nation. It embraces the true theocracy of God,—neither Jews nor Gentiles as such, but all who will believe (comp. on vers. 47, 49). '*Made manifest*,' again, is not a mere outward manifestation, but a revelation of Jesus as He is. Thus the meaning of the words is not, '*I baptize in water in order that Jesus may come to my baptism, and may there receive a testimony from on high*;' but, '*I baptize that I may declare the necessity of that forsaking of sin without which no true manifestation of Jesus can be made to the heart*.' The words in their real meaning, therefore, are in perfect harmony with the accounts of the Synoptists. The advance of thought from the unrecognised Jesus of ver. 26 to the '*made manifest*' of ver. 31 is obvious. It corresponds with the '*standeth*' of ver. 26, and the '*coming unto*' him of ver. 29; with the fact, also, that the one is the first, the other the second, testimony of the Baptist.

Ver. 32. **And John bare witness, saying, I have beheld the Spirit descending.** The effect of what the Baptist had seen had remained, and still remains, with him in all its power: '*I have beheld*.'—**And it abode upon him.** John had not merely seen the Spirit descend with dove-like motion upon Jesus; he had also seen that it '*abode*' upon Him,—the symbol of an abiding and permanent possession.

Ver. 33. **And I knew him not.** The first clause of this verse, like that of ver. 31, is attended with peculiar difficulty, for it is hardly possible to imagine that, intimately connected as the families of Jesus and of the Baptist were, the former should have been for thirty years personally unknown to the latter. Moreover, Matt. iii. 14 seems distinctly to imply not only that such personal acquaintance existed before the baptism, but that the Baptist even then knew Jesus as greater than himself. Here, however, he says that until after the descent of the Spirit he '*knew Him not*.' Without noticing the other explanations which have been given, we may observe that the solution of the difficulty is to be found in keeping distinctly before us the *official* and not *personal* light in which both Jesus and the Baptist are presented to us here. No denial of *personal* knowledge of Jesus has any bearing upon the point which the Baptist would establish. He is himself an official messenger of God, intrusted with a commission which he is to

continue to discharge until such time as he is superseded by the actual arrival of Him whose way he prepares. But this latter is also the 'Sent' of God, and has particular credentials to produce. Until these are produced, the herald of His approach cannot 'know' Him in the only character in which he has to do with Him. No private acquaintance with Him—and, we may even say, no private convictions as to His Messianic character—will justify that recognition of Him before which alone the herald may give way. The great King from whom the herald and the Ambassador are alike sent has named a particular sign which shall attest the position of the latter, and close the labours of the former. That sign must be exhibited before the herald of the Ambassador's approach will be warranted to withdraw. Until then the one 'knows' not the other.

But he that sent me to baptize in water, he said unto me, Upon whosoever thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and abiding upon him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Spirit. As to the sign, comp. ver. 32. It is the token that in Jesus are fulfilled the prophecies of the Old Testament with regard to the pouring out of the Spirit in the Messianic age, and especially to the impartation of the Spirit to the Messiah Himself (Isa. lxi. 1; Luke iv. 18),—prophecies which describe the crowning glory of the latter days. John's baptism could only point to the laying aside of sin; that of Jesus brought with it the quickening into spiritual life (comp. on iii. 5). It is to be noticed that the words 'Holy Spirit' are here used without the article. The object is to fix our attention, not upon the Spirit in His personality, but upon the power of that spiritual influence which He exerts. It would be better to translate, 'the power of the Holy Spirit,' were it not difficult to use such an expression, in conformity with the idiom of the English tongue, in the many passages where this particular form of the original is employed.

Ver. 34. And I have seen, and have borne witness that this is the Son of God. 'I have seen,' for the result of the seeing abides unchanged and ever present: 'I have borne witness,' for the Baptist has entered on that one witness-bearing for which he was sent (ver. 7), and which it will henceforth be his office simply to repeat. It is particularly to be noticed that the

'witness' referred to is not that Jesus baptizes with the Spirit, but that He is 'the Son of God,'—a designation which expresses the divine nature and character of Jesus, and with this the relation in which He stands to the Father. In one aspect He is God; in another He is the Son of God, the Son distinct from the Father. The link of connection between the transcendent conclusion of the Baptist and the fact upon which it rests is probably to be found in the thought that He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit, who therefore has the power to impart the gifts and influence of the Spirit of God, must be Divine. The special form which this confession of our Lord's divinity takes was, we cannot doubt, determined by the words spoken from heaven: 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased' (Matt. iii. 17).

It has been sometimes maintained that 'Son of God' must be understood as a mere designation of 'the Messiah.' For this opinion we believe that no evidence can be found, either in Scripture or in early Jewish writings. There are, indeed, passages in the Old Testament, acknowledged to be prophecies of the Messiah, in which a Divine Sonship is attributed to Him (see especially Ps. ii. 7); but the name seems to be always indicative of nature, and not merely of office. How the name was understood by the Jews of our Lord's day may be seen from chap. v. 18, 19, x. 29, 30, 33.

It is important to compare this section with the corresponding portions of the other Gospels. The omissions are very remarkable. We say nothing of the Evangelist's silence as to the circumstances of our Lord's birth and early years; this belongs to the general plan of the Gospel, which here agrees with that of Mark. But it is noteworthy that nothing is said of the baptism of Jesus, or of the temptation which followed. To the baptism, however, there is a clear allusion in vers. 33, 34; hence its place in the order of events is before ver. 19. The temptation also was at an end before John 'saw Jesus coming unto him' (ver. 29). On the other hand, these verses contain many coincidences in language with the Synoptic Gospels. John's application of Isa. xl. 3, and the contrast which he draws between himself, baptizing in water, and Him who shall baptize with the Holy Ghost, are related by every Evangelist. In all the Gospels, also, we find words similar to those of ver. 27.

## CHAPTER I. 35-51.

*Jesus manifests Himself to hearts open to receive Him.*

35 **A** GAIN the next day after<sup>1</sup> John stood,<sup>2</sup> and two of his  
36 disciples; And looking upon Jesus as he walked, he  
37 saith, "Behold<sup>3</sup> the Lamb of God! And the two disciples<sup>a</sup> Ver. 29.  
38 heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. Then<sup>4</sup> Jesus turned,  
and saw<sup>5</sup> them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye?

<sup>1</sup> omit after

<sup>4</sup> And

<sup>2</sup> was standing

<sup>5</sup> beheld

<sup>3</sup> Behold,





that it is not really inferior. When the earlier words (ver. 29) had once made clear what was signified by the announcement of 'the Lamb of God,' this title by itself, in its own simplicity, really conveyed a fuller meaning. 'The Lamb of God' which taketh away the sin of the world' brought to mind the paschal sacrifice; but in pointing to Jesus as 'the Lamb of God,' the Baptist, implying all that he had expressed before, presents to the thought all the symbolism of the words,—with the true paschal sacrifice joining the true paschal feast.

Ver. 37. And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. The witness of the Baptist has its proper effect,—an effect, we cannot doubt, foreseen and designed by himself (chap. iii. 27-30). Those who listen to it turn from him, and follow Jesus.

Ver. 38. And Jesus turned and beheld them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? They who thus follow Jesus shall not do so in vain. As in the sense of their own unworthiness they walked after Him, He turned, and inquired what they sought.—And they said unto him, Rabbi, which is to say, being interpreted, Teacher, where abidest thou? 'Where is Thy permanent resting-place and home, that as pupils we may seek Thee there, and may abide with Thee till we have seen the glory of which we have heard?' By the title Rabbi (which strictly meant *my master or lord*, but which in the time of Jesus had already come to be applied to teachers) they had been wont to address their own master (chap. iii. 26); and they naturally give the same name of honour to Jesus. When they have done with 'seeking,' when they have found Him, they will say more (comp. xiii. 13).

Ver. 39. He saith unto them, Come, and ye shall see. They came therefore and saw where he abode, and abode with him that day. The seeker shall not seek in vain. They had asked where He abode; and that the answer of Jesus was a direct meeting of their request is proved by the statement immediately made by the Evangelist, that 'they came and saw where He abode.' The nature of the intercourse is not described. We are left only to imagine from the confession of Andrew in ver. 41 what must have been the solemn teachings, the gracious communications of Himself by Jesus, the patient instructing of ignorance, the tender removal of doubts, until, in all the joy of their new discovery, they could say, 'We have found.' This much, however, we seem entitled to infer from the thrice-repeated 'abide' or 'abode,'—a word characteristic of the Fourth Gospel, and always full of deep and solemn import,—that the Evangelist designs to convey to us something more than the thought of mere outward presence with Jesus.—It was about the tenth hour. There are four passages in which the Evangelist directly refers to the hour of the day at which an event occurred (see chap. iv. 6, 52, xix. 14). But for the last of these passages it might be natural to suppose that John, like the other Evangelists, reckons time from sunrise, an hour being the twelfth part of the (varying) interval between sunrise and sunset. As, however, Mark records (chap. xv. 25) that Jesus was crucified at the 'third hour' (between 8 and 9 A.M.), and John expressly states that His *condemnation* was later than the 'sixth hour,' the probability that the latter writer follows a different reckoning is very strong.

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Further investigation has shown that at the very time when this book was written a mode of computation substantially agreeing with our own was known in Asia Minor (where John wrote) and elsewhere. It is easy to see that in such a matter as this a writer naturally follows the custom of those amongst whom he lives, and whom he has immediately in view as his readers. We shall assume, therefore, in each case that the hour (of fixed length, not variable) is reckoned from midnight or noon. Here the tenth hour will no doubt be the hour between 9 and 10 A.M.

Ver. 40. One of the two which heard from John and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. Andrew belonged to Bethsaida (ver. 44), and is again referred to in vi. 8, xii. 22. That he is now spoken of as the brother of Peter is an interesting indication of the importance attached by the Evangelist to the latter. There is little reason to doubt that the second of the two was the Evangelist himself. Simon Peter, who has not yet been mentioned, is introduced to us here as if he were well known to the reader—an illustration of the writer's tendency to anticipate what is hereafter to be fully explained: we have an equally striking instance in the mention of Mary in chap. xi. 2.

Ver. 41. He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messiah (which is, being interpreted, Christ). The peculiar language of this verse leads directly to the conclusion that each of the two disciples mentioned in the previous verse had gone in search of his brother, and the fact is not without interest as confirming the supposition that the second of the two disciples was John. Andrew and his brother, John and his brother, seem to have been the only two pairs of brothers in the apostolic band. The finding was not accidental. Andrew had gone in search of Peter, John of James. When Andrew found the object of his search, his joyful announcement was, 'We have found the Messiah.' This Hebrew term—occurring only twice in the New Testament, here and at iv. 25, in the mouth of the woman of Samaria—denotes 'the Anointed One,' and is immediately interpreted by the Evangelist, the Greek word 'Christ' having the same meaning. One of the great hopes of Israel was fulfilled.

Ver. 42. He brought him to Jesus. There can be little doubt that Peter had shared the expectations and longings of his brother Andrew, as well as of all those more earnest spirits of the time who were waiting for 'the consolation of Israel.' He too had been 'seeking,' and he too finds.—Jesus looking upon him said, Thou art Simon the son of John: thou shalt be called Cephas. Jesus looked upon him with that divine glance which read the heart (comp. ii. 25); and, following the custom of which so many illustrations are afforded in the Old Testament, marked the great crisis in his life which had now arrived by giving him a new name, 'Cephas,' with which corresponds the Greek word Petros (a 'stone' or 'piece of rock'). How much importance was attached by the Evangelist to this name given to his brother apostle will appear on other occasions in the course of his Gospel. The name Johannes, or John, corresponds to the Hebrew Jochanan; in Matt. xvi. 17 the same name is represented in a slightly different form (Jona).

Ver. 43. The next day he would go forth into

**Galilee.** On this day begins the journey consummated at chap. ii. 1 (see note).—**And he findeth Philip; and Jesus saith unto him, Follow me.** The first two disciples had 'sought' and 'followed' Jesus; then they had found Him. Now Jesus (seeks and) 'finds' Philip, and bids him follow Him (compare the two parables in Matt. xiii. 44, 46). We are left to infer that the command was immediately obeyed. The calling of Philip and of Nathanael is recorded by John alone; both Matthew and Mark relate that Jesus called to Him Andrew and Peter, James and John (Matt. iv. 18-22; Mark i. 16-20; compare Luke v. 1-11); but it will be remembered that this was a second summons, later (by some months, probably) than the events of which we are reading here.

**Ver. 44. Now Philip was of Bethsaida, out of the city of Andrew and Peter.** This verse appears to be inserted for the purpose of clearly showing that these three disciples were Galileans. The next verse would lead to a similar inference in regard to Nathanael, and this inference is confirmed by chap. xxi. 2. It is thus an undesigned (but not the less striking) proof of the Johannine authorship of this Gospel that a similar statement is not made with regard to the two disciples of vers. 37-40. John is aware that he was himself well known to be a Galilean. In simple consciousness that he was so, and that no one would doubt it, he omits notice of the fact in his own case and that of his brother. But he felt it of importance to bring out the Galilean birth of the others. We might have supposed them to be Judeans; but Judas is the only Judean of the apostolic circle. The importance of the fact in the mind of the Evangelist is connected with the opinion entertained by him of 'the Jews' and of 'Judas.'

**Ver. 45. Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.** It was in all probability on the journey from Bethany beyond Jordan to Cana of Galilee that Jesus had 'found' Philip. As on the journey recorded in Luke xxiv. 13, the conversation turned on the things concerning the promised Saviour which were contained in 'Moses and all the prophets'; and to this conversation the particular form of conviction impressed upon the mind of Philip was due. He does not speak of Jesus simply as the Messiah (ver. 41), but as the fulfilment of the law and the prophets. There is an advance in fulness on the confession of ver. 41, and the special character of the advance is important; it helps to explain the words of the following verse. There is nothing accidental in the finding of Nathanael. Philip had gone in search of him in particular. Can we doubt that it was because he knew him to be specially fitted and ready to be a follower of Jesus?

**Ver. 46. And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see.** The mind of Nathanael (who, from his close association with Philip, is probably to be identified with the Bartholomew of the earlier Gospels) is, as we shall more fully see below (vers. 47, 48), full at the moment of that prophetic hope the fulfilment of which was associated, not with Nazareth, but with Bethlehem or Jerusalem. To him all good was summed up in the thought of the coming King; and it may have been that at the moment

a place unconnected with the great promise of God seemed to him a place from which no good could come. Such considerations go far towards explaining his disparaging remark; though they do not completely remove the impression which we receive from the words, that Nazareth was a place held in very low esteem. We have, however, no other information that such prejudice (whether well or ill founded) existed; and the only notices in Scripture which can throw light on the subject are the records of the obstinate unbelief of the Nazarenes (Matt. xiii. 58) and their attempt upon the life of Jesus (Luke iv. 29).

**Ver. 47. Jesus saw Nathanael coming to him, and saith of him, Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile.** Again, as at ver. 43, we are left to infer that the call thus addressed to Nathanael was obeyed; and in his obedience to it he illustrates the frame of mind for which he is immediately commended by Jesus. He is ingenuous, willing to be taught, ready to receive what is shown to him to be truth, however strongly it may conflict with his prepossessions. Jesus saw him as he drew near, and commended him as a genuine Israelite in whom there was no guile. The last words have been sometimes understood as if they were explanatory of the term Israelite, that term, again, being supposed, together with the word 'guile,' to allude to the history of Jacob. As the name of Jacob ('supplanter') was changed to Israel ('prince of God'), the characteristic of this patriarch's true descendants will be absence of guile. The suggestion is ingenious, but for several reasons hardly tenable. (1) It is guile of an entirely different kind that is here referred to; (2) There is no special connection between the qualities displayed by Jacob on the occasion when he received the name Israel and those that here distinguish Nathanael; (3) The part of Jacob's history present to the mind of Jesus, in ver. 51, was the vision at Bethel, which belongs to a period much earlier than that in which his name was changed; (4) It is difficult to believe that 'Israelite' is intended to convey no meaning beyond absence of guile. It is rather to be taken as denoting one who belongs to the true people of God (comp. ver. 31); and the words that follow are then added to bring out its special meaning upon this occasion. Nathanael, in short, is 'of God,' is 'of the truth,' has no selfish impure aims, and therefore he shall be fully taught.

**Ver. 48. Nathanael saith unto him, Whence knowest thou me? The words of Jesus had been spoken while Nathanael was drawing near, and the latter heard them. He does not deny the truth of the commendation, and yet it can hardly be said, on the other hand, that he accepts it. It is enough for him that he sees that he is discerned by one whom he had not previously met, and what he asks is, Whence testest Thou Thy knowledge of me? Who has told Thee anything about me?—Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee.** Jesus replies by referring to a previous, probably recent, incident in his history. The heart of the guileless man had been so moved by the great thought stirring at that time with respect to the Saviour at hand, that he had retired under a fig tree to study the Scriptures, or meditate, or pray. It is this that (as the Greek implies) is now brought to his recollection—not his

*being* under the fig tree, but his *having gone* under it; and we are thus rather invited than forbidden to suppose that the emotions filling his heart at the moment, and impelling him to seek solitude, had been peculiarly strong. Then Jesus had seen him, and had recognised in him one of His sheep, just as His sheep recognise Him (x. 16). If the incident had taken place in Nathanael's own Cana, it must have been all the more striking to him that it should thus be known. But, however this may have been, these wonderful words of Jesus, coming suddenly upon him after long preparation for them and after the instructions just given him by Philip, at once set his heart on fire, and drew from him the memorable confession which follows.

Ver. 49. **Nathanael answered him, Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God; Thou art King of Israel.** The confession is the highest that has yet been made, for it is impossible to understand 'Son of God' as the simple equivalent of Messiah (see note on ver. 34). Yet it is a confession coming out of the very heart of Old Testament prophecy, and to be accounted for by those circumstances of Nathanael's past history and present position that have been already noticed. It was not merely of a great Deliverer that the prophets had spoken. They had spoken not less of Jehovah Himself as coming, and as coming to be their Deliverer and their King. In the second Psalm, in particular, we find the two ideas of the Son of God and of Zion's King closely conjoined; and in the seventy-second Psalm the psalmist had described in glowing language that kingdom of peace and righteousness, extending over the whole earth, of which a shadow and type were afforded by the reign of Solomon. But if it be undeniable that these ideas were imbedded in the Old Testament, there is nothing inconceivable in their being gathered from it and enunciated by those who in meditation and prayer had caught its spirit. Add to this the self-evidencing power of the Person of Jesus, which must have been so much more to Nathanael than the mere record can be to us, and we need not wonder that he should thus acknowledge Jesus. Nor is there any warrant for describing his feelings as vague. What he did was to rise to the height of Old Testament prophecy; what he saw was that this must be Jehovah that was to come, the universal King.

The three confessions have risen as they have succeeded one another. Higher than the last they cannot rise. The Lord Himself is come; His kingdom is without limit and without end.

Ver. 50. **Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? Thou shalt see greater things than these.** An intimation of that growth of divine revelation which this Gospel teaches us shall be made the portion of all,—of some to an ever-increasing fulness of blessing, of others to an ever-increasing fulness of judgment. For the one, see chap. xiv. 12; for the other, chap. v. 20. These 'greater things' are more particularly mentioned in the next verse.

Ver. 51. **And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you.** This is the first occasion on which we find the repeated 'Verily,' so characteristic of the discourses related in this Gospel. The formula is always employed to mark some important step in a discourse, where the words of Jesus either take some new start, or rise to some higher stage. Both these conditions are fulfilled in the verse before us. As to the first, it will be

observed that Jesus no longer addresses Nathanael alone: the plural instead of the singular is used, and we must understand that He is speaking to all the disciples. As to the second, again, the words of themselves suggest the higher stage of revelation promised.—**Ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.** The figure is taken from Jacob's dream (Gen. xxviii. 12). A wanderer from his father's house and country, he is encouraged by a vision which teaches him that earth is united with heaven, and that God's messengers descend to minister to those who are the objects of God's care. If the ascent of the angels is mentioned (in Gen. xxviii.) *before* the descent, this is because to Jacob is shown an intercourse that already exists, not one that now begins. Some angels are already returning from earth, their ministries accomplished. What Jacob saw in vision is now in the highest sense fulfilled. There is real and unceasing intercourse between earth and heaven. It is to Jesus that the angels descend; it is from Him that they return to heaven; through His presence on earth this union between earth and heaven exists. Even though He is in His state of humiliation, it is His bidding that the angels do. Perhaps it is this thought that accounts for the mention (in *this* verse) of the ascending angels first. These words have no direct reference to the angelic visits received by Jesus at different points of His earthly ministry; still less can we refer them to miracles to be hereafter performed, greater even than that displayed to Nathanael, miracles of which the next chapter will furnish the first example. We have simply a symbolical representation of the fact that through the Incarnation and sufferings of Jesus heaven is opened, is brought into the closest and most constant communion with earth, so that the latter is itself transfigured with the glory of God's special abode. This interpretation is confirmed by two circumstances mentioned in the verse: (1) Nathanael is to see 'heaven standing open,'—not 'opened' as if it might again be closed, but opened so as to continue open. It is the complete withdrawal of the inner veil of the Tabernacle, so that all the children of God, now made priests and high priests unto God, even the Father, may pass freely into the innermost sanctuary and out of it again without interruption and without end. (2) Jesus speaks of Himself as the 'Son of man.' This important designation, often used by Jesus of Himself, once only used of Him by another (Acts vii. 56), is not, as some maintain, a simple equivalent of 'Messiah.' It expresses rather One in whom all that truly belongs to humanity is realised, and by whom it is represented. Jesus is the Son of *man*, connected with no special race, or class, or condition, equally associated with all, equally near to all, in whom all are equally interested, and may be equally blessed. The designation is not a fourth confession, additional to the three that have been already made, for it comes from the lips of Jesus Himself. It is rather that in which all the confessions meet, the expression of the Personality to which they all belong. Jesus is the Incarnate Word, and as such He is the 'Messiah,' the One 'of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write,' the 'Son of God and King of Israel.' Every child of humanity, realising his true humanity in Him, has as his own the blessings associated with these three aspects of the Redeemer. He is anointed with the

Holy Ghost, lives in that love which is the fulfilling of the law, is a son in the house of the Heavenly Father, himself a king. These are the 'greater things' which every one who is an 'Israelite in-

deed' shall see in the new creation introduced by the 'Word become flesh,' and enlightened by the full brightness of that Light in whose presence old things pass away, and all things are made new.

## CHAPTER II. 1-11.

### *The Miracle at Cana of Galilee.*

- 1 **A**ND the third day there was a marriage in <sup>a</sup> Cana of <sup>a</sup> Ver. 12 ;  
 2 Galilee ; and the <sup>b</sup> mother of Jesus was there : And both <sup>c</sup> chap. iv. 46,  
 3 Jesus<sup>1</sup> was called, and his disciples, to the marriage. And <sup>d</sup> xxi. 2.  
 4 when they wanted wine,<sup>2</sup> the mother of Jesus saith unto him, <sup>e</sup> Chap. vi. 42,  
 5 They have no wine. Jesus<sup>3</sup> saith unto her, 'Woman, <sup>f</sup> xix. 26, 27.  
 6 what <sup>g</sup> Chap. xix. 26 ;  
 7 have I to do with thee ? <sup>h</sup> comp chap  
 8 'mine hour is not yet come. His <sup>i</sup> xx. 13, 15.  
 9 mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, <sup>j</sup> 2 Sam. xvi.  
 10 do *it*. And there were set<sup>4</sup> there six waterpots of stone, <sup>k</sup> 10, etc.  
 11 after<sup>5</sup> the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or <sup>l</sup> Comp. chap.  
 12 three firkins apiece. Jesus saith unto them, Fill the water- <sup>m</sup> vii. 6, 8, 30,  
 13 pots with water. And they filled them up to the brim. And <sup>n</sup> viii. 20 ; also  
 14 he saith unto them, Draw out<sup>6</sup> now, and bear unto the <sup>o</sup> chap. xii. 23,  
 15 governor<sup>7</sup> of the feast. And they bare *it*. When<sup>8</sup> the ruler <sup>p</sup> xiii. 1,  
 16 of the feast had tasted <sup>q</sup> xvii. 1.  
 17 the water that was made wine, and <sup>r</sup> Mark vii. 3 ;  
 18 knew not whence it was : (but the servants which drew<sup>9</sup> the <sup>s</sup> Luke xi. 38 ;  
 19 water knew ;) the governor<sup>7</sup> of the feast called<sup>10</sup> the bride- <sup>t</sup> chap. iii. 25.  
 20 groom, And saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth  
 21 set forth good wine ;<sup>11</sup> and when men have well drunk,<sup>12</sup>  
 22 then that which is worse : *but*<sup>13</sup> thou hast kept the good wine  
 23 until now. This beginning of miracles did Jesus<sup>14</sup> in Cana <sup>u</sup> Chap. i. 24,  
 24 of Galilee, and manifested forth<sup>15</sup> his <sup>v</sup> xvii. 22, 24 ;  
 25 glory ; and his disciples <sup>w</sup> 2 Pet. i. 17 ;  
 26 believed on<sup>16</sup> him. <sup>x</sup> comp. chap.  
 27 xii. 41.

<sup>1</sup> And Jesus also

<sup>2</sup> And when wine was wanting

<sup>3</sup> And Jesus

<sup>4</sup> *omit* set

<sup>5</sup> placed after

<sup>6</sup> *omit* out

<sup>7</sup> ruler

<sup>8</sup> But when

<sup>9</sup> had drawn

<sup>10</sup> calleth

<sup>11</sup> Every man first setteth on the good wine

<sup>12</sup> *men* are drunken

<sup>13</sup> *omit* but

<sup>14</sup> This did Jesus as the beginning of his signs

<sup>15</sup> *omit* forth

<sup>16</sup> in

CONTENTS. The general subject of the second great division of the Gospel is continued in this section. It contains an account of the miracle at Cana of Galilee, in which, as we are told at ver. 11, Jesus 'manifested His glory.' The Redeemer is still in the circle of His disciples and friends, and there are no traces of His approaching conflict with the world. Our thoughts are directed solely to Himself, and to the glorious nature of that dispensation which He is to introduce.

Ver. 1. *And the third day.* The third day, as reckoned from the day last mentioned (chap. i. 43-51); the *sixth* day referred to in these

chapters. The first is the day of the Baptist's interview, at Bethany, with the priests and Levites sent from Jerusalem (i. 19-28). On the second (i. 29-34), John bears testimony to Jesus as the Lamb of God. The third is the day on which the two disciples follow Jesus (i. 35-42). On the next day Jesus sets out for Galilee (i. 43). That day, the next, and part of the third day may have been spent in travelling; for, if Bethany was in the neighbourhood of Bethabara, and if the latter may be identified with the modern Beit-nimrim, the distance traversed even to Nazareth must have been more than eighty English miles. Very possibly, however, Bethany may have lain farther



From photographs.

CANA.





north (see note on chap. i. 21).—There was a marriage, or marriage-feast. The feast, which was the chief constituent in the ceremonies attending marriage, extended over several days,—as seven (Gen. xxix. 27; Judg. xiv. 12), or even fourteen (Tobit viii. 19).—In *Cana of Galilee*. There is a *Kanah* mentioned in the book of Joshua (xix. 28) as one of the towns in the territory of Asher, situated near Zidon. This cannot be the place referred to here. No other town of the same name is mentioned by any sacred writer except John (see references), who in every instance marks the place as *Cana of Galilee*. From this many have hastily inferred that 'of Galilee' was part of the name, distinguishing this village from some other *Cana*,—perhaps from that mentioned above, which (though really within the limits of Galilee) lay near to Phœnicia. Two villages of Galilee claim to be the *Cana* of this chapter,—Kefr-Kenna, four or five miles north-east of Nazareth; and Khurbet-Kana, about eleven miles north of the same place. The latter village is usually said to bear the name *Kana-el-Jellil* (i.e. *Cana of Galilee*); if so, and if the antiquity of the name could be established, this might be decisive, although even then it would be hard to understand how Christian tradition could so long regard Kefr-Kenna as the scene of our Lord's first miracle, when within a few miles there existed a place bearing the very name found in the Gospel. The question cannot be further discussed here; we will only express a strong conviction that Kefr-Kenna is the *Cana* of our narrative. It seems probable that John himself has added the words 'of Galilee,' that he may lay stress upon the province, not the town. To him the point of main interest is, that this manifestation of the Saviour's glory took place in *Galilee*.—And the mother of Jesus was there,—already present as a friend, possibly a relative. Mary comes before us twice in this Gospel, at the commencement and at the close of our Lord's public life (ii. 1-11, and xix. 25-27), and is also referred to in another passage (vi. 42); but she is never mentioned by name. As for his own name the Evangelist always substitutes words expressive of relationship to Jesus ('the disciple whom Jesus loved'), so with him Mary's name gives place to 'the mother of Jesus.' Both here and in chap. xix. the designation has special significance. It expresses not only the light in which she appeared to John, but that in which he knew that she appeared to Jesus. It is essential to the spirit of the narrative to behold in Jesus one who, with the warmest filial affection, acknowledged Mary as His mother. Thus only do we see the yielding of the very closest earthly relationship to yet higher claims. The word of Jesus, 'He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me,' must in its spirit be exemplified in His own case. Most fitting, therefore, is the use of the tenderest designation here. All that is dear and sacred in the name of mother was felt by Him in its deepest reality at the very time when He showed that every earthly tie must give way at the call of His Father in heaven.

Ver. 2. And Jesus also was called, and his disciples, to the marriage. The form of the sentence shows that our chief attention is to be fixed on Jesus, not on the disciples. They were invited as His disciples. Those who came were probably the five or six mentioned in chap. i., viz.

Andrew, Simon Peter, Philip, Nathanael, and John himself (and probably James).

Ver. 3. And when wine was wanting. The failure (which must be understood as complete) may have been occasioned by the long continuance of the festivities, but more probably arose from the presence of several unexpected guests.—The mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine. Nothing was more natural than that Mary should be the one to point out to her Son the perplexity of the family; but the whole tenor of the narrative compels attention to one thought alone. The absolute singleness with which Jesus listens to the voice of His heavenly Father is the point to be brought out. Had it been consistent with His mission to lend help at the summons of any human authority, no bidding would have been so powerful as that of His mother. Many conjectures as to Mary's object in these words are at once set aside by the nature of His answer. There may have been in her mind no definite idea of the kind of help that might be afforded, but she felt that help was needed, and that what was needed could be given by her Son. The reply of Jesus, however, shows that, besides perplexity and faith, there was also presumption in Mary's words: she spoke as one who still had the right to suggest and to influence His action.

Ver. 4. And Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? The English words convey an impression of disrespect and harshness which is absent from the original. This use of the Greek word for 'woman' is consistent with the utmost respect. In Homer, for example (*Iliad*, xxiv. 300), Priam thus addresses Hecuba, his queen, and other examples of the same kind might easily be given. This Gospel itself shows that the word is not out of place where the deepest love and compassion are expressed: see chap. xix. 26, xx. 13, 15. Yet the contrast of 'woman' and 'mother' must strike every one who reads with attention. The relation of mother, however precious in its own sphere, cannot be allowed to enter into that in which Jesus now stands. John does not relate the incident recorded in Matt. xii. 46-50; Mark iii. 31-35; Luke viii. 19-21; but the same thought is present here. Still more distinctly in this lesson taught in the words that follow, 'What have I to do with thee?' The rendering defended by some Roman Catholic writers (though not found in the Vulgate, or in the Rhemish Testament of 1582), 'What is that to thee and me?'—that is, 'Why should we concern ourselves with this failure of the wine?'—is altogether impossible. The phrase is a common one, occurring in Judg. xi. 12; 2 Sam. xvi. 10, xix. 22; 1 Kings xvii. 18; 2 Kings iii. 13; 2 Chron. xxxv. 21; Matt. viii. 29; Mark i. 24, v. 7; Luke iv. 34, viii. 28: comp. also Josh. xxii. 24; 2 Kings ix. 18; Ezra iv. 3; Matt. xxvii. 19. These passages show beyond doubt the meaning of the words: whoever makes use of the phrase rejects the interference of another, declines association with him on the matter spoken of. Hence the words reprove,—though mildly. They do more; in them Jesus warns even His mother against attempting henceforth to prescribe or suggest what He is to do. Thus understood, the words are an irresistible argument against the Mariolatry of Rome.—Mine hour is not yet come. In two other places in this Gospel Jesus refers to the coming of 'the hour' (xii. 23,



xvii. 1); and three times John speaks of His hour as not yet come (vii. 30, viii. 20) or as now come (xiii. 1). The other passages throw light on this, showing the peculiar solemnity which belongs to the words before us. In every instance 'the hour' is fraught with momentous issues:—'the hour' when the restraint put upon His foes shall continue no longer; when He shall pass away from the world to His Father; when He shall be glorified. So here the hour is that of the manifestation of His glory. The language used in chap. xiii. 1 and xvii. 1, together with the general teaching of the Gospel, shows that the hour is not self-chosen, but is that appointed by the Father. He came to do the will of Him that sent Him, the appointed work at the appointed time. That time none may hasten or delay by a single instant. If, then, the miracle quickly followed upon these words, which would seem to have been the case, this can present no difficulty; the Son waited for the very *moment* chosen by the Father's will.

Ver. 5. *His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it.* The answer of Jesus (ver. 4) plainly implied that His hour would come. Mary, therefore, turns to the servants, and bids them be ready. The words are indefinite, and we have no right to suppose either that she now looked for miraculous help, or that she had received some private intimation of her Son's purpose. She waits for the 'hour': whatsoever the hour may bring, let the servants be prepared to do His bidding. Mary here retires from the scene.

Ver. 6. *And there were there six waterpots of stone, placed after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece.* The waterpots were near at hand,—in the court or at the entrance to the house, not in the house itself. Considering the many washings and purifyings of the Jews, there is nothing to surprise us in the number or in the size of the waterpots. Even a small family might easily possess six, and when the number of guests was large, each of them would naturally be in use. There is much uncertainty as to the value of Hebrew measures, whether of length or of capacity. Most probably the measure here mentioned was equivalent to between eight and nine of our imperial gallons, so that the 'firkin' of our version is not far wrong. If each waterpot contained two 'firkins' and a half, the whole quantity of water would be about 130 gallons.—On the words, 'of the Jews,' see the note on chap. i. 19. Even here the phrase is not without significance. When we have set ourselves free from our prevailing habit of using this term simply as a national designation, we cannot but feel that the Evangelist is writing of that with which he has entirely broken, and is characterizing the ordinary religion of his day as one that consisted in ceremonies and external purifications.

Ver. 7. *Jesus saith unto them, Fill the waterpots with water.* Probably they were now empty, perhaps in consequence of the ablutions before the feast.—*And they filled them up to the brim.* And when they are thus filled, nothing more can be done to fit them for their original design. They are able to furnish all that can be supplied for 'the purifying of the Jews.'

Ver. 8. *And he saith unto them, Draw now, and bear unto the ruler of the feast.* As the

words are commonly understood, the servants are bidden to bring to the table (in smaller jars or bowls) part of the contents of the larger vessels, which were themselves too unwieldy to be moved without difficulty. If this be the meaning, we must still ask, What was it that was drawn, water or wine? Many will answer wine, believing that the point at which the miracle is effected comes in between the seventh and eighth verses, and that all the water in the vessels was then made wine. The strong argument in favour of this interpretation is the exactness with which the number and size of the vessels are specified; and no difficulty need be found in the abundance of the supply. 'He, a King, gave as became a king' (Trench). Still there is nothing in the text that leads necessarily to this interpretation; while the language of ver. 9, 'the servants which had drawn the water,' distinctly suggests that what they drew was water, which, either as soon as drawn, or as soon as presented to the guests, became wine. But there is yet another explanation (suggested in Dr. Westcott's *Characteristics of the Gospel Miracles*, p. 15), having much in its favour. The Authorised Version (ver. 8) gives the command to the servants as 'Draw out now,' etc., plainly implying that it was out of the waterpots that they were bidden to draw. But the original word is simply 'draw,' or 'draw water.' This would seem to suggest that the servants were sent again to the spring or fountain from which they had drawn the water to fill the waterpots. First, the vessels set for the purifying of the Jews are completely filled. Nothing is neglected that can be needed to prepare for all ceremonial requirements. There the water rests, and rests unchanged. Not till now is the water drawn for the thirsty guests, in bowls filled, not from vessels of purification, but at the spring itself; it is borne to the ruler of the feast, and it is wine! The decision between the last two interpretations must be left with the reader; it will probably rest less on the words of the narrative than on the view which is taken of the significance and meaning of the miracle. See below on ver. 11.—By 'the ruler of the feast' is meant either an upper servant, to whom was intrusted the duty of tasting the different drinks and articles of food, and, in general, of superintending all the arrangements of the feast; or one of the guests acting as president of the feast, at the request of the bridegroom or by election of the guests. The latter view is favoured by our knowledge of Jewish usages (comp. Eccclus. xxxii. 1, 2), and by the fact that the ruler is spoken of as distinct from the servants, and, as the next verse shows, was ignorant of the source from which the wine was supplied.

Ver. 9, 10. In these verses we have the testimony borne to the completeness of the miracle. The ruler of the feast, a guest speaking as the representative of the guests, calling the bridegroom (who supplied the feast, and in whose house they were), emphatically recognises the excellence of the wine, not knowing 'whence it was.' 'From whatever source this may have come, it is wine, and good wine:' this is his witness. 'Whatever it may be, it has but now flowed from the spring as water,' is the unexpressed but implied testimony of the servants. The simplicity of the double witness gives it its force; the guests as yet know nothing of the miracle, and thus afford the strongest evidence of its truth. An attempt is sometimes

made to soften down an expression used by the ruler of the feast, 'when men are drunken.' There need, however, be no scruple as to giving the word its ordinary meaning. The remark does but express his surprise at the bridegroom's departure from the ordinary custom, in bringing in so late wine of such excellence as this. The common maxim was that the best wine should be given first, when it could be appreciated by the guests; the weak and poorer when they had drunk more than enough, and the edge of their taste was blunted. No answer is recorded,—a plain proof, were any needed, that the Evangelist values the incident not so much for its own sake as for the lesson it conveys.

Ver. 11. This did Jesus as the beginning of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and manifested his glory; and his disciples believed in him. This, His first sign, was wrought in Galilee, where Isaiah (ix. 1, 2) prophesied that Messiah's work should begin. The threefold comment of the Evangelist is of the utmost importance. This was a sign, and His first sign; in it He manifested His glory; His disciples believed in Him. 'Sign' is one of John's favourite words. Of the three words used in the New Testament to denote a miracle, the first (literally meaning 'power') is not once found in his Gospel; the second ('prodigy,' 'wonder') occurs once only (iv. 48); the third, 'sign,' as many as seventeen times. The earliest use of 'sign' in connection with a miracle is in Ex. iv. 8, and the context makes the meaning very clear: the miracle was the sign of an invisible Divine Presence with Moses, and hence it attested his words. Thus also, when the manna was given, the miracle manifested the glory of the Lord (Ex. xvi. 7). The miracles of Jesus, and all His works, manifested not only God's glory (viii. 50), but His own: they were signs of what He is. This gives a new starting-point. Each miracle is a sign of what He is, not only in regard of the power by which it is wrought, but also by its own nature and character,—in other words, it is a symbol of His work. The words which John

adds here once for all are to be understood with every mention of a 'sign,' for in every miracle Jesus made manifest (removed the veil from) His glory, revealed Himself. Two other passages complete the view which John gives us of his meaning. Of the 'signs' he says himself: 'These (signs) are written that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye may have life in His name.' Of the glory he says: 'We beheld His glory, glory as of an only-begotten from a father.' First, then, this miracle attested the mission of Jesus as the Christ; the miracle established, as for Moses so for Him, the divine commission, and ratified His words. Next, it revealed His own glory as Son of God, manifesting His power, in a work as sudden and as inexplicable as a new creation; and not only His power but His grace, as He sympathizes alike with the joys and with the difficulties of life. Further, the miracle brought into light what He is in His work. The waterpots filled full for the purifying of the Jews stand as an emblem of the religion of the day, nay, even of the ordinances of the Jewish religion itself, 'carnal ordinances imposed until a time of reformation.' At Christ's word (on one view of the miracle) the water for purifying is changed into wine of gladness: this would point to Judaism made instinct with new life. On the other view, nothing is withdrawn from the use to which Jewish ritual applies it, but the element which could only minister to outward cleansing is transmuted by a new creative word. 'The law was given through Moses: grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.' The object of all the signs (xx. 31) was answered here in the disciples. They had believed already that He was Christ, the Son of God (i. 41, 49); they now believed in Him,—each one 'throws himself with absolute trust upon a living Lord,' recognising the manifestation of His glory. The miracles in this Gospel, like the parables in the other Gospels, are a test of faith. They lead onward the believer to a deeper and a firmer trust; they repel those who refuse to believe.

## CHAPTER II. 12-22.

### *The Transition to the Public Ministry, and the Cleansing of the Temple.*

- 12 **A**FTER this he went down to "Capernaum, he, and his mother, and his brethren," and his disciples: and they continued there not many days.
- 13 And "the Jews" "passover" was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem,
- 14 "And" found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting:
- 15 And when he had made a scourge of small cords,<sup>7</sup> he drove them all out of the temple,<sup>6</sup> and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables;

<sup>1</sup> his mother and brethren

<sup>6</sup> And he <sup>6</sup> temple-courts

<sup>2</sup> abode

<sup>3</sup> passover of the Jews

<sup>7</sup> And making a scourge of cords

<sup>a</sup> Chap. iv. 46,

vi. 17, 24, 59.

<sup>b</sup> See chap.

vii. 3

<sup>c</sup> Chap. v. 1,

vii. 2, xi. 55,

xix. 42.

<sup>d</sup> Ver. 23; chap

vi. 4, xi. 55.

xii. 1, xiii. 1,

xviii. 28, 39,

xix. 14.

<sup>e</sup> Comp. Matt.

xxi. 12.

- 16 And said unto them that sold doves,<sup>8</sup> Take these things hence ;  
 17 make not / my Father's house an house of merchandise. And<sup>9</sup> / Luke ii. 49.  
 his disciples<sup>4</sup> remembered that it was written, <sup>chap. xii.</sup> The zeal of thine  
 18 house hath eaten<sup>10</sup> me up. Then answered the Jews<sup>11</sup> and <sup>16, xvi. 4;</sup>  
 said unto him, <sup>Luke xxi. 8</sup> What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that<sup>12</sup> <sup>Pa. lix. 9.</sup>  
 19 thou doest these things? Jesus answered and said unto them, <sup>See chap. vi.</sup>  
<sup>30.</sup> Destroy this temple, and <sup>Mark xiv.</sup> 'in three days I will raise it up. <sup>58, xv. 29.</sup>  
 20 Then said the Jews,<sup>13</sup> Forty and six years was this temple in <sup>Matt. xii. 40.</sup>  
 21 building, and wilt thou rear<sup>14</sup> it up in three days? But he <sup>xvii. 63.</sup>  
 22 spake of <sup>Comp. Col.</sup> the temple of his body. When therefore he was <sup>ii. 9.</sup>  
 risen<sup>15</sup> from the dead, his disciples<sup>4</sup> remembered that he had<sup>16</sup> <sup>See ver. 17.</sup>  
 said this unto them,<sup>17</sup> and they believed <sup>See chap</sup> the scripture, and <sup>vii. 38.</sup>  
 the word which Jesus had said.

<sup>8</sup> the doves    <sup>9</sup> omit And    <sup>10</sup> shall eat  
<sup>12</sup> because    <sup>13</sup> The Jews therefore said  
<sup>15</sup> raised    <sup>16</sup> omit had

<sup>11</sup> The Jews therefore answered  
<sup>14</sup> raise  
<sup>17</sup> omit unto them

CONTENTS. In the passage before us we have the first section of the third great division of our Gospel. Jesus leaves the circle of His disciples, and begins His public work. This is done at Jerusalem, after a few days spent in Capernaum. In the metropolis of Israel He appears as the Son in His Father's house; and in the cleansing of the old temple and the promise of the raising up of a new one He illustrates the nature of the work He is to do. The first symptoms of opposition accordingly appear in this passage. Jesus is rejected by the theocracy of Israel, and the foundation is laid for His entering upon wider fields of labour. The subordinate parts of this section are—(1) ver. 12; (2) vers. 13-22.

Ver. 12. After this he went down to Capernaum. Nazareth, not Cana, would appear to be the place from which Jesus 'went down' (from the hill-country of Galilee,—comp. chap. iv. 47, 49, 51) to Capernaum, for His brethren, who are not said to have been with Him in Cana, are now of the company. All that can be said with certainty as to the position of Capernaum is, that it was situated on the western coast of the Lake of Gennesaret, not far from the northern end of the lake; whether the present Tell Hum or (less probably) Khan Minyeh be the site, we cannot here inquire (see note on Matt. iv. 13). We have here the earliest appearance of this busy and thriving Galilean town in the history of our Lord's life. The visit related in Matt. iv. 13 and Luke iv. 31 belongs to a later period than this, a period subsequent to the imprisonment of John the Baptist (see chap. iii. 22). Luke's narrative, however (chap. iv. 23), contains an allusion to earlier miracles in Capernaum. Whether reference is made to this particular visit (which, through the nearness of the passover, was of short duration) or not, it is interesting to note that the two Evangelists agree in recording a residence of Jesus in this town earlier than that brought into prominence in Matt. iv. 13. In the Fourth Gospel Capernaum occupies a very subordinate place; the centre of the *Judean* ministry was Jerusalem.—He, and his mother and brethren, and his disciples. In his usual manner John

divides the company into three groups, naming separately Jesus, His relations by natural kindred, His disciples. The brethren of Jesus were James, Joses (or Joseph), Simon, and Judas (Matt. xiii. 55; Mark vi. 3). In what sense they are called 'brethren,' whether as the sons of Joseph and Mary, as sons of Joseph by an earlier marriage, or as sons of Mary's sister ('brother' taking the meaning of near kinsman), has been a subject of controversy from the third century to the present day. It is impossible to discuss the question within our limits, though something further must be said when we come to later chapters (vii., xix.). Here we can only express a very decided conviction that the last mentioned of the three opinions is without foundation, and that the 'brethren' were sons of Joseph, their mother being either Mary herself or, more probably, an earlier wife of Joseph (comp. note on Matt. xiii. 58). This verse alone might suggest that the brethren were not disciples, and from chap. vii. 5 we know that they were not.

Ver. 13. And the passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. The expression, 'passover of the Jews,' is very remarkable, and can be explained only by the usage already noticed in ver. 6. To John's mind the nation cannot but present itself habitually as in opposition to his Master. As yet, indeed, Jesus is not confronted by an organized band of adversaries representing the ruling body of the nation; but we are on the verge of the conflict, and the conflict itself was only the outcome of ungodliness and worldliness existing before their manifestation in the persecution of Jesus. The light was come, but it was shining in darkness: this darkness rested on what had been the temple, the city, the festivals, of the Lord. The feast now at hand is not 'the Lord's passover' (Ex. xii. 11), but 'the passover of the Jews.' The prevailing spirit of the time has severed the feast from the sacred associations which belonged to it, so that Jesus must go up rather as Prophet than as worshipper,—not to sanction by His presence, but powerfully to protest against the degenerate worship of that day. The word of prophecy must be fulfilled: 'And the Lord whom ye seek shall sud-

denly come to His temple, . . . but who may abide the day of His coming?' (Mal. iii. 1, 2).

Ver. 14. And he found in the temple-courts those that sold oxen and sheep and doves. The scene of this traffic was the outer court, commonly spoken of as the court of the Gentiles, but known to the Jews as 'the mountain of the house.' This court (which was on a lower level than the inner courts and the house or sanctuary itself) occupied not less than two-thirds of the space inclosed by the outer walls. Along its sides ran cloisters or colonnades, two of which, 'Solomon's porch' on the east, and the 'Royal porch' on the south, were especially admired : to these cloisters many of the devout resorted for worship or instruction, and here, no doubt, our Lord often taught (chap. x. 23). In strange contrast, however, with the sacredness of the place was what He now 'found in the temple-courts.' At all times, and especially at the passover, the temple was frequented by numerous worshippers, who required animals that might be offered in sacrifice. The law prescribed the nature of each sacrifice, and enjoined that all animals presented to the Lord should be 'without blemish' (Lev. xxii. 19, 20),—a requirement which 'the tradition of the elders' expanded into minute detail. Hence sacrifice would have been well-nigh impossible, had not facilities been afforded for the purchase of animals that satisfied all the conditions imposed. The neighbouring quarter of the city naturally became a bazaar for the purpose; but unhappily the priests, yielding to temptations of gain, had suffered such traffic to be carried on within the precincts of the temple itself. At what period this abuse took its rise we do not know. Some have supposed that the last words of Zechariah (chap. xiv. 21) refer to similar practices, the verse being rendered : 'In that day there shall be no more the trafficker in the house of the Lord of hosts.' The book of Nehemiah shows examples of the spirit of disorder and irreverence from which such usages naturally spring; and the representations of Malachi make it easy to understand that the priests would be only too readily accessible to the allurements of a gainful traffic. In the court of the Gentiles, then, stood those who offered for sale oxen and sheep,—also doves (for the poor, Lev. xiv. 22, and for women, Lev. xii. 6). The wording of this verse ('those that sold,' etc.) shows that the trade was now an established custom. The discordance between a cattle-mart and a place for sacred worship and converse need not be drawn out in detail. But this was not all.—And the changers of money sitting—at their tables in the sacred place. The annual tribute which every man of Israel was bound to pay to the temple treasury could be paid only in the half-shekel 'of the sanctuary' (see Matt. xvii. 24-26). All who came from other lands, therefore, or who had not with them the precise coin, must resort to the exchangers, who (as we learn from the Talmud) were permitted to do their business in the temple during the three weeks preceding the passover. Their profits (at a rate of interest amounting to ten or twelve per cent.) were very great.

Ver. 15. And making a scourge of cords, he drove them all out of the temple-courts, and the sheep and the oxen. The scourge was made for the expulsion of the animals, but by it Jesus also declared His purpose to the traders themselves. The words show distinctly that it is with the men

that He is dealing; but He drives *them* from the sacred place by banishing the instruments and means of their unholy traffic. In a figurative sense Messiah was said to come armed with a scourge. 'Rabbi Eliezer was asked by his disciples: How should a man live to escape the scourge of the Messiah? He answered: Let him live according to the law and in love towards men.'—And poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables—the counters on which the bankers placed their heaps of change.

Ver. 16. And said unto them that sold the doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise. We must not suppose that the sellers of doves were more leniently dealt with. The oxen might be driven away, the tables overturned, but the cages of birds must be carried out by their owners: hence it is to these alone that Jesus directly addresses words which were really spoken to all, and which explained his action. Any zealous reformer, who understood the faith of Israel, might have done as much: indeed, the first treatise in the Talmud contains regulations for the due reverence of the temple which utterly condemn such profanations as are related here. But though the action of Jesus might imply no more, His words declare that He vindicates the honour of *His Father's* house. Thus He at once honours His Father and declares Himself. He offers Himself to Israel as the Son of God. In this deed, as in all His acts and words (comp. Matt. xiii. 11-15), there is a mingling of revelation and reserve: the declaration of Sonship is combined with an act which no true Israelite could fail to approve. Those who, yielding to the impulse of right, and listening to the voice of conscience, accepted the *act*, would be led to ponder the *words*; in them would be fulfilled the promise, 'To him that hath shall more be given.' Those who hardened their heart against the act lost the revelation which was given with it, and were in danger of losing all.—John does not speak of the cleansing of the temple as miraculous, but the Saviour's words themselves mark it as a 'sign'; and it is only by thinking of a divine awe attending the words (comp. chap. xviii. 6) that we can explain the immediate submission of the traffickers. The following verses describe the twofold effect of the act of Jesus on the disciples and on 'the Jews.'

Ver. 17. His disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thine house shall eat me up. Clearly (from the contrast with ver. 22) they remembered this scripture *at that time*. The quotation is from Ps. lxi., a psalm which is several times referred to in the New Testament. See Rom. xv. 3, xi. 9, 10; Acts i. 20 (perhaps John xv. 25); and comp. Ps. lxi. 21 with the accounts of the crucifixion. We have no record of the interpretation of this psalm by Jewish writers in a Messianic sense, but New Testament usage can leave no doubt that such an application of many verses is both allowable and necessary. What was true of the devout and afflicted Israelite who wrote the words was true in the fullest sense of the Servant of Jehovah, of whom all such faithful servants were imperfect types. The exact meaning of the words here quoted will best appear if we take the whole verse: 'The zeal of Thine house consumed me: and the reproaches of them that reproached Thee fell on me.' The parallelism of the lines shows that the chief antithesis lies in

the pronouns. Dishonour shown to God has been felt by the psalmist as a cruel wrong to himself. 'Zealous indignation for *Thine* house, inspired by the sight or news of unworthy treatment of *Thine* house, consumed *me*,—so to say, destroyed my very life.' The quotation is not exact; what in the psalm is past is here future: 'shall eat me up.' An examination of other passages will show that, where John uses the words 'it is written,' he does not necessarily imply that the quotation is made with literal exactness. Had we the past, 'consumed,' we might be led to think of the inward consuming of holy zeal from which resulted this act of indignation; the future, 'will eat me up,' brings us nearer to what we have seen to be the meaning of the passage in the psalm. His zeal for His Father's house will devour His very life—will bring destruction in its train.

Ver. 18. **The Jews therefore answered.** The effect on the disciples has been related; what will be the response of the rulers to the self-revelation of Jesus? The word 'therefore' answers to the Evangelist's knowledge of the fact. Their position of inward antagonism is present to his thought, though it has not yet found expression in their deeds. And said unto him, **What sign shewest thou unto us because thou doest these things?**—This answer (replying to the act rather than the words) is in the tone of indignation, not of sincere inquiry: 'Because Thou doest these things Thou art bound to show a sign, a sign that shall justify such actions.' The effectual cleansing was the 'sign,' but as such they would not receive it. Their question is a token of the failure (so far as the nation was concerned) of the manifestation which Jesus had given of Himself as Son of God. Both in the question and in the response of our Lord we have a clear parallel in the earlier Gospels: see Matt. xii. 38-40.

Ver. 19. **Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple.** The most important point for the understanding of this verse is the distinction between the two words which the English Bible renders 'temple.' The word used in vers. 14 and 15 denotes generally the whole area within the walls, and here especially the *outermost* space in the sacred enclosure; while the latter signifies the holy place, and the holy of holies. The sanctity of the temple-court has been vindicated; the true temple, the sanctuary, the dwelling-place of Jehovah, has not been mentioned in the narrative until now. But even this very significant change of expression would not render the meaning plain, for the words were intended to be enigmatical—to be understood after, and not before, the event which fulfilled them. If we would understand them, we must take them in connection with ver. 21, 'But He spake of the temple of His body.' To the English reader they seem merely to convey a warning that, if the Jews go on with such profanation as that which Jesus had checked, they will bring the temple to ruin. But it is of the *sanctuary* that He speaks, not of the temple-court which had sustained the desecration. When therefore He says, 'Go on in your present way, and by so doing destroy this temple,' He means that their rejection of Himself shall culminate in their co-signing to destruction the temple of His body. The essence of the temple is, that it is the dwelling-place of God: His body is God's temple, for in Him 'dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.' The material

temple had been for ages the type of His body, in which God first truly manifested Himself to man. The continuance of the temple was no longer needed when the living temple was reared; but it was by the destruction of the latter that the destruction of the former was brought about,—its destruction, that is, as the dwelling-place of God. In the holiest place, behind the veil, Jehovah had dwelt: when the Lord Jesus was crucified, the veil was rent, the holy of holies was thrown open, and by being thrown open was shown to be God's habitation no longer. Our Lord therefore might well use words which relate at once to His body and to the temple, such being the connection between the two. And in three days I will raise it up.—His crucifixion involved the total destruction of the Jewish temple and polity. No longer will there be a special place in which God's glory will be revealed, to which God's worshippers will come,—a place in which are national distinctions, a court of the Gentiles, a court of Israel, a court of the priests. His resurrection will establish a new temple, a new order of spiritual worship. He Himself, as raised and glorified Messiah, will be the Corner-stone of a spiritual temple, holy in the Lord. This is one of the many passages in the Gospel which show to us how perfectly all the future of His history was anticipated by our Lord (see chap. iii. 14, etc.). There is no real difficulty in the words, 'I will raise it up;' chap. x. 17, 18, furnishes a complete explanation.

Ver. 20. **The Jews therefore said, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou raise it up in three days?** They answer only by another question,—not an inquiry, but really an indignant and scornful rejection of His words. It was at the close of the year 20 B.C. or the beginning of 19 B.C. that Herod the Great began the rebuilding of the temple. The temple itself was completed in eighteen months; the extensive buildings round it required eight years more. So many additions, however, proved necessary before the work could be regarded as finished, that the final completion is assigned by Josephus to the year 50 A.D., seventy years after the commencement of the undertaking, and but twenty years before Jerusalem was destroyed. The 'forty and six years' bring us to the year 28 A.D. It is perhaps strange that the Jews should associate the long term of years with the rebuilding of the sanctuary and not the temple as a whole; it is, however, very likely that, at all events, the ornamentation of this building might still be incomplete. Moreover, in their indignant rejoinder to the saying of Jesus, they not unnaturally take up the very term which He had used, even though it applied in strictness only to the most sacred portion of the structure.

Ver. 21. See above on ver. 19.

Ver. 22. **When therefore he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he said this.** Again (as in ver. 10) we are struck by the suddenness with which the narrative breaks off. It has been related mainly to bring out the rejection of Jesus by the Jews; the Evangelist pauses upon it only for a moment to speak of the effect on the disciples, as after the former miracle he records that the 'disciples believed in' Jesus (ver. 11). We do not find the same statement here, but are told (comp. chap. xii. 16) that the words which baffled the Jews were mysterious to the disciples

likewise. Whilst, however, the Jews rejected the 'hard saying,' the disciples 'kept all these things and pondered them in' their 'heart,' not understanding them until the prophecy was fulfilled. This record of words not understood at the time, even by the inner circle of the followers of Jesus, is a striking indication of the simple truthfulness of the narration (comp. ver. 11). And they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had said.—The recollection of the words after the resurrection led the disciples (we cannot doubt that John is speaking chiefly of his own experience) to a fuller and richer faith in 'the scripture' and 'the word' of Jesus. The 'word' must be that of ver. 19; but it is not so easy to explain 'the scripture.' It cannot mean the Old Testament as a whole, for in this sense John always uses the plural, 'the Scriptures.' It would be easier to suppose that the Evangelist has in mind some passages of the Old Testament predictive of the resurrection (e.g., from Ps. xvi.; Isa. liii.; Hos. vi.), or the rebuilding of the true temple (Zech. vi. 12-15). If, however, we include several passages, the difficulty in the use of the singular remains as before; and if we seek for a single prediction, we cannot meet with any one that agrees so closely with our Lord's saying as to be thus definitely pointed out as 'the scripture.' We seem bound to refer the word to the only 'scripture' that (ver. 17) has been quoted in the context, Ps. lix. 9. This verse, speaking of the consuming and of its cause, formed the groundwork of the first part of our Lord's saying ('Destroy this temple'). Hence this passage of the psalm and 'the word which Jesus had said' form one whole, and as such are mentioned here. The disciples, guided to deeper faith by that which was at the time wholly mysterious (and which was a 'stone of stumbling' to those who believed not), recognised the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy and of the prediction of Jesus Himself in the death and resurrection of their Lord. Thus in the first scene of His public ministry, we have Jesus before us in the light in which the whole Gospel is to present Him, at once the crucified and the risen Lord.

The whole narrative has been subjected to keen scrutiny both by friends and foes, but its importance has hardly yet been properly acknowledged. A few words must still be said as to its relation to the other Gospels, and as to its place in this.

Each of the earlier Gospels records a cleansing of the temple, accomplished, however, not at the outset but at the close of our Lord's public ministry, on the Monday (probably) preceding the crucifixion. To some it has seemed altogether improbable that there should have been two acts of precisely similar character at the extreme points of the official life of our Lord. But is the character of the two the same? We would not lay too much stress on some of the differences of detail, for apparent divergences sometimes present themselves in connection with narratives which no one would be inclined to explain as relating to different events. There are, however, not a few touches in the account before us which show the hand of an eye-witness;—such as the making of the scourge of cords, the scattering of the money of exchange,

the words addressed to the sellers of doves alone, the form of the rebuke, the conversation with the Jews, the incidental notice of the forty-six years (a statement which only elaborate calculation shows to be in harmony with independent statements of another Evangelist). Finally, there is the remarkable perversion before Caiaphas of the words regarding the rebuilding of the temple, on which nothing contained in the earlier Gospels throws any light, and which (especially as given in Mark xiv. 58) bears all the marks of having been exaggerated in the popular mind through lapse of time. Such considerations as these seem to show that, if the cleansing can have occurred once only, its place in the history is that assigned by John. But is it really at all improbable that two cleansings should have taken place, separated by such an interval of time as the Gospel narrative presupposes? No one will think that the action of our Lord, as here related, would put an end to the traffic, when this very narrative brings before us an official challenge of His authority so to act. At the last Passover Jesus would find the temple-court as much the scene of worldly trading as it was at the first. Did He then, it will be asked, condone the evil when in intervening years He went up to the same feast? This question must be met by another: Have we reason to believe that Jesus attended any other Passover than these two? The feast of chap. v. 1 was in all probability not a Passover, and at the Passover mentioned in vi. 4 He certainly was not present. If then He attended two Passovers only, is it at all improbable that on the second occasion, as on the first, He would vindicate the purity and sanctity of the temple?

The purpose, too, of the two cleansings is different. At the close of His ministry He is hailed as King of Israel, and He indignantly expels from God's house those who practically denied to Gentiles any share in that place of prayer. Now He acts as the Son of God, offering Himself in this character to rulers and to people, that they may acknowledge His Sonship and obey His word. 'He came unto His own home,' His home as Son, 'and they that were His own received Him not.' This is the turning-point of His ministry: henceforth He is the rejected of the Jews. This is the significance of the narrative before us. The cleansing and the mysterious words spoken by Jesus (ver. 19) are alike 'signs.' The first was a sign of His Sonship, a sign which they refused to accept. That refused, He gives the second; just as, when the Pharisees asked of Him a sign from heaven, He refused to give any save the sign of the prophet Jonah. If they will not listen to the former, the latter alone remains. He would have renewed the life of the temple, but they would not have it so. Let them, then, go on in their ways, and destroy the temple; let them go on in their rejection of Him, and destroy His life. The result will be the raising of a spiritual temple which shall be none of theirs—a temple in which God Himself shall dwell, manifested to all men in the Son.

## CHAPTER II. 23-III. 21.

*The Conversation with Nicodemus.*

- 23 **N**OW when he was in Jerusalem at the <sup>a</sup> passover, in the <sup>a</sup> Ver. 13.  
 feast <sup>a</sup> day,<sup>1</sup> many <sup>b</sup> believed in his name, when they <sup>b</sup> saw <sup>b</sup> See chap.  
 24 the miracles <sup>c</sup> which he did. But Jesus did not commit <sup>c</sup> him-  
 25 self unto them, because <sup>c</sup> he <sup>c</sup> knew all <sup>c</sup> men, And <sup>c</sup> needed  
 not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in  
 man.<sup>d</sup> <sup>c</sup> Chap. iv. 29,  
 v. 42, vi. 61,  
 64, x. 24, 27,  
 xvi. 19, 30,  
 xxi. 17;  
 Rev. ii. 23;  
 Mark viii. 17;  
 Luke vii. 39;  
 40. Comp.  
 1 Sam. xvi.  
 7; Acts i. 24  
 Chap. vii.  
 50, xix. 39.  
 Chap. vii.  
 26, 48, xii.  
 42. See  
 Matt. ix. 18.  
 Chap. i. 38.  
 Chap. ix.  
 16, 33.  
 Acts x. 38.  
 Chap. i. 13;  
 Gal. vi. 15;  
 Tit. iii. 5;  
 Jas. i. 18;  
 1 Pet. i. 3, 23;  
 1 John ii. 20,  
 iii. 9, iv. 7,  
 v. 1, 4, 18.  
 Matt. vi. 10,  
 xii. 28, etc.
- 1 There <sup>e</sup> was a man of the Pharisees, named <sup>e</sup> Nicodemus, a  
 2 <sup>e</sup> ruler of the Jews: The same came to Jesus <sup>e</sup> by night, and  
 said unto him, <sup>f</sup> Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come  
 from God: <sup>g</sup> for <sup>g</sup> no man <sup>g</sup> can do these miracles <sup>g</sup> that thou  
 3 doest, except <sup>h</sup> God be with him. Jesus answered and said  
 unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be  
 4 <sup>i</sup> born again,<sup>14</sup> he cannot see the <sup>i</sup> kingdom of God. Nicodemus  
 saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can  
 he enter the <sup>i</sup> second time into his mother's womb, and be  
 5 born? Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except  
 a man be <sup>i</sup> born of water and <sup>i</sup> of the Spirit,<sup>17</sup> he cannot enter  
 6 into the <sup>i</sup> kingdom of God. That which is <sup>i</sup> born of the flesh  
 is flesh; and that which is <sup>i</sup> born of the Spirit <sup>i</sup> is spirit.  
 7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.<sup>20</sup>  
 8 The wind bloweth <sup>j</sup> where it listeth, and thou hearest the  
 sound <sup>j</sup> thereof, but canst not tell <sup>j</sup> whence it cometh, and  
 whither it goeth: so is every one that is <sup>j</sup> born of the Spirit.<sup>25</sup>  
 9 Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things  
 10 be? <sup>k</sup> Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master <sup>k</sup>  
 11 of Israel, and knowest <sup>k</sup> not these things? Verily, verily, I say  
 unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that <sup>k</sup> we  
 12 have seen; and <sup>k</sup> ye receive not our witness. If I have <sup>k</sup> told  
 you earthly <sup>k</sup> things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe,  
 13 if I tell you <sup>k</sup> of heavenly things? <sup>k</sup> And <sup>k</sup> no man hath  
 ascended up to <sup>k</sup> heaven, but <sup>k</sup> he that came down from <sup>k</sup> heaven,

- <sup>1</sup> at the feast      <sup>2</sup> omit when they      <sup>3</sup> beholding his signs      <sup>4</sup> trust  
<sup>5</sup> on account of      <sup>6</sup> his discerning all      <sup>7</sup> And because he  
<sup>8</sup> should bear witness concerning a man; for he himself discerned what was  
 in the man  
<sup>9</sup> And there      <sup>10</sup> to him      <sup>11</sup> thou art come from God, a teacher  
<sup>12</sup> no one      <sup>13</sup> signs      <sup>14</sup> any one have been born anew      <sup>15</sup> a  
<sup>16</sup> any one have been      <sup>17</sup> of water and spirit      <sup>18</sup> hath been  
<sup>19</sup> or spirit      <sup>20</sup> anew      <sup>21</sup> breatheth      <sup>22</sup> voice  
<sup>23</sup> but knowest not      <sup>24</sup> hath been      <sup>25</sup> or spirit  
<sup>26</sup> come to pass      <sup>27</sup> Thou art the teacher      <sup>28</sup> perceivest thou  
<sup>29</sup> that which we know and bear witness of that which  
<sup>30</sup> omit have      <sup>31</sup> the earthly      <sup>32</sup> if I tell you the heavenly things  
<sup>33</sup> And no one hath ascended up into heaven      <sup>34</sup> out of.

14 *even*<sup>35</sup> the 'Son of man which is in heaven.<sup>36</sup> And 'as Moses  
 lifted up<sup>37</sup> the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son  
 15 of man be 'lifted up:<sup>37</sup> That 'whosoever believeth 'in him  
 should not perish, but<sup>38</sup> have 'eternal life.  
 16 For "God so loved "the world, that he gave his "only  
 begotten Son, that whosoever<sup>39</sup> believeth in him should<sup>40</sup> not  
 17 "perish, but have everlasting<sup>41</sup> life. 'For God sent not his<sup>42</sup>  
 Son into the world to condemn<sup>43</sup> the world; but that the  
 18 world through him might<sup>44</sup> be saved. 'He that believeth on<sup>45</sup>  
 him is not condemned:<sup>46</sup> but<sup>47</sup> "he that believeth not is con-  
 demned<sup>48</sup> already, because he hath not believed in the name  
 19 of "the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condem-  
 nation, 'that<sup>49</sup> light is come into the world, and men loved  
 darkness rather than light,<sup>50</sup> because their deeds were evil.<sup>51</sup>  
 20 For every one that doeth<sup>52</sup> evil hateth the light, neither  
 21 cometh<sup>53</sup> to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved.<sup>54</sup> But  
 he that doeth truth<sup>55</sup> cometh to the light, that his deeds<sup>56</sup>  
 may be made manifest, that they are<sup>57</sup> wrought in God.

<sup>35</sup> omit even.<sup>37</sup> lifted on high<sup>39</sup> every one that<sup>43</sup> that he may judge<sup>47</sup> omit but<sup>49</sup> the darkness rather than the light<sup>53</sup> committeth<sup>55</sup> the truth<sup>38</sup> that every one<sup>40</sup> may<sup>44</sup> may<sup>48</sup> hath been judged<sup>50</sup> and he cometh not<sup>54</sup> works<sup>56</sup> works<sup>36</sup> omit which is in heaven<sup>39</sup> that believeth may in him<sup>41</sup> eternal<sup>45</sup> in<sup>49</sup> is the judgment, because the<sup>51</sup> for their works were wicked<sup>54</sup> works should be convicted<sup>57</sup> because they have been<sup>35</sup> Chap. i. 51.<sup>36</sup> Num. xxi. 9.<sup>37</sup> Chap. viii. 28.<sup>38</sup> Vers. 16, 18,<sup>39</sup> 36; chap.<sup>40</sup> vi. 40, 47,<sup>41</sup> vii. 38, xi. 25,<sup>42</sup> 20, xx. 31.<sup>43</sup> Chap. vi.<sup>44</sup> 56, 57, xv. 4.<sup>45</sup> xvii. 21;<sup>46</sup> 1 John v. 11.<sup>47</sup> Vers. 16, 35;<sup>48</sup> chap. iv. 14,<sup>49</sup> 36, v. 24, 39,<sup>50</sup> vi. 27, 40, 47,<sup>51</sup> 54, 68, x. 28,<sup>52</sup> xii. 25, 50,<sup>53</sup> xvii. 2, 3;<sup>54</sup> 1 John i. 2,<sup>55</sup> etc.<sup>56</sup> Rom. v. 8,<sup>57</sup> viii. 38;<sup>58</sup> Eph. ii. 4;<sup>59</sup> 1 John iv. 9,<sup>60</sup> 11, 14, 19;<sup>61</sup> Rev. i. 5.<sup>62</sup> Chap. i. 50.<sup>63</sup> See chap. i.<sup>64</sup> 18, 49.<sup>65</sup> Chap. x. 28.<sup>66</sup> Chap. xii. 47.<sup>67</sup> Chap. v. 24.<sup>68</sup> Chap. xvi.<sup>69</sup> 8, 9.<sup>70</sup> Matt. iv. 16;<sup>71</sup> Luke i. 79;<sup>72</sup> chap. i. 51,<sup>73</sup> viii. 12, xii.<sup>74</sup> 35, 46; Acts<sup>75</sup> xxvi. 18;<sup>76</sup> Rom. xiii. 12;<sup>77</sup> Eph. v. 8.<sup>78</sup> 1 Thess. v.<sup>79</sup> 4, 5; 1 Pet.<sup>80</sup> ii. 9; 1 John<sup>81</sup> ii. 8. See<sup>82</sup> chap. ix. 5.

CONTENTS. It is of much importance to keep the closing verses of chap. ii. in close connection with the opening verses of chap. iii. (see the commentary on iii. 1). Rejected by the theocracy of Israel Jesus turns to individuals, but these are not confined to Israel. The woman of Samaria and the king's officer of Galilee are beyond the theocratic pale. Nicodemus, however, who is first introduced to us, does belong to the chosen people; and the conversation of Jesus with him, as it leads him from an imperfect to a perfect faith, illustrates the power which Jesus, though rejected by Israel and doomed to die, shall exercise over the hearts of men. The subordinate parts of this section are—(1) ii. 23-25; (2) iii. 1-15; (3) iii. 16-21.

Ver. 23. Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, at the feast, many believed in his name, beholding his signs which he did. In this verse we pass from the public presentation of Jesus to the people and 'the Jews' in the house of His Father to His more private ministry in Jerusalem: rejected as the Son of God, He continues His work as a Prophet, doing many 'signs,' and by these leading many to faith in His mission. The time spoken of is still the season of the Passover. The remarkable repetition, 'at the Passover, at the feast,' may probably be intended to direct our thoughts especially to the very night of the paschal supper. If so, the purification of the temple may have fallen at the very time when every Israelite

sought to purify himself and his house for the great festival that was now approaching. The words would also point to our Lord's observing the feast Himself. It is noticeable that we do not here read 'the Passover of the Jews': the desecration of the festival has been condemned in one of its manifestations, but the festival itself is honoured. John gives us no particulars of the 'signs' which Jesus did; comp. chaps. xxi. 25, vi. 4, and several passages in the earlier Gospels (e.g. Mark i. 34, vi. 55, 56). The signs attested His words, which were the description of His 'name' (see chap. i. 12), and, beholding the signs, many became believers in His name, accepting Him as being in truth what He declared Himself to be. The faith was real but not mature; its imperfection is illustrated in the next verse.

Vers. 24, 25. But Jesus did not trust himself unto them on account of his discerning all men, and because he needed not that any should bear witness concerning a man; for he himself discerned what was in the man. The effect produced upon Jesus Himself by this imperfection of faith is described in very remarkable language. Many 'believed in His name,' and so took the first step towards that surrender of the heart to Him which in ver. 11 we read of as made by His disciples. Had they thus fully trusted themselves to Him, then would He have trusted Himself to them. This is one of the illustrations of the teaching, so characteristic of the Fourth Gospel, with regard to



the union and communion of Jesus with His people; if they abide in Him, He abides in them. That these believers have not reached such maturity of faith Jesus Himself discerns. No witness from another is needed by Him, for the thoughts of every man with whom He speaks are 'naked and opened' unto Him. The words of John do not in their literal sense go beyond this; but, in declaring that Jesus read the heart of all who came to Him, they imply that other truth with which the rendering in our Bibles has made us familiar: 'He knew what was in man.'

Ver. 1. *And there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews.* That this verse does not begin a new section is clearly shown by the first word 'And,' which links it with the last chapter; another indication of the same kind is seen when the true reading is restored in ver. 2 ('to Him' for 'to Jesus'). A closer examination will show that the connection thus suggested is really very close and important. In chap. ii. 24, 25, a very marked emphasis is laid on 'man'; the same word and thought are taken up in this verse. Ver. 2 of this chapter brings before us a belief agreeing in nature and ground with that spoken of in chap. ii. 23, 24. The last thought of chap. ii. is powerfully illustrated by the answers which Jesus returns to the *thoughts* of Nicodemus. Clearly, then, John means us to understand that out of the many who 'believed in the name' of Jesus was one deserving of special attention, not merely as representing a higher class and special culture, but chiefly because, brought by the signs to a degree of faith, he was desirous of knowing more; and our Lord's dealings with Nicodemus show how He sought to lead all who were so prepared to a deeper knowledge and higher faith. The name Nicodemus is found in the Talmud, as a Hebrew surname borne by a Jew, a disciple of Jesus, whose true name was Bonai. There is nothing to show that the persons are identical, and on the whole it is more probable that they are not. It is most natural to regard the name Nicodemus as Greek, not Hebrew; compare 'Philip' (chap. i. 43). Nicodemus is described as a Pharisee (see notes on chaps. i. 24, vii. 32), and as 'a ruler of the Jews,'—*i.e.*, a member of the Sanhedrin (comp. chap. vii. 50), the great council of seventy-one which held supreme power over the whole nation. In other passages John uses 'ruler' in this sense (see vii. 26, 48, xii. 42); here only does he join with it the words 'of the Jews.' The added words (see chap. i. 19) show that Nicodemus stood connected with that body which was ever present to John's thought as the assemblage of those who represented the self-seeking and formalism which Jesus came to subvert. The elements of hostility already existed, though the open conflict had not yet begun (see chap. ii. 18). It is not easy always to define the relation between 'the Pharisees' and 'the Jews,' as the two terms are used by John; for under the latter designation the leaders of the Pharisees would certainly be included. The former perhaps usually brings into prominence teaching and principles; the latter points rather to external action. The Pharisees took alarm at the new *doctrine*, the Jews resented the new *authority*. Nicodemus is not free from the externalism and prejudices of his class, but his candour and his faith stand out in wonderful contrast to the general spirit evinced by the Pharisees and the Jews.

Ver. 2. *The same came to him by night.* Chap. xix. 38, 39, seems clearly to show that the motive of Nicodemus in thus coming by night was the same as the cause of Joseph's secret discipleship—the 'fear of the Jews.' That he himself was one of 'the Jews' only makes this explanation more probable. We cannot doubt that he came alone; whether Jesus also was alone, or whether John or other disciples were present at the interview, we cannot tell.

*And said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art come from God, a teacher.* Every word here is of importance. On Rabbi see the note, chap. i. 38. We may be sure that a member of the sect that carefully scrutinised the Baptist's credentials (chap. i. 19-24) would not lightly address Jesus by this title of honour, or acknowledge him as Teacher. But the words 'Thou art come from God' will appear even more significant, if we keep in mind that the most familiar designation of the Messiah was 'the coming One,' 'He that should come.' The appearing of the Baptist quickened in the minds of 'all men' (Luke iii. 15) the recollection of God's great promise; and the signs lately wrought by Jesus in Jerusalem may well have excited in the mind of this Pharisee hopes which find a hesitating expression in his words. No ordinary prophet would have been thus acknowledged as one 'come from God.' At the very least, the confession assigns to Jesus a supreme authority as Teacher. The confession of Nicodemus was made in the name of others besides himself. 'We know;'—others amongst the Pharisees, perhaps already others amongst the rulers (chap. xii. 42), had reached the same point. No doubt the number was but small, too small to make confession easy, or to banish the very natural fear of the Jews which brought Nicodemus to Jesus by night.

For no one can do these signs that thou doest except God be with him. Nicodemus acknowledges the works to be 'signs' (not so the Jews, chap. ii. 18), and he shows that in him the signs had precisely answered the designed end. The faith indeed which rested on these alone was imperfect, but it was faith; more could be gained; the faith could be educated, raised higher, and made more complete. How truly this faith has been educated will be shown when (chap. xix. 39) it shall come forth in honour of that *crucified* Redeemer who is here to be proclaimed (ver. 14). Such education, however, can be effected only by the word of Jesus, leading to fellowship with Himself. For this word Nicodemus now comes. In reading the following verses we must bear in mind that, as Jesus would train and strengthen the faith of Nicodemus, it is the *weak* side of this faith that is kept in view; but the Saviour's acceptance of the faith as real is plainly to be seen in the openness and unreservedness of the teaching He vouchsafes. Many have pointed out the contrast between this discourse and those related in the other Gospels; but had there been no difference between discourses delivered to the half-instructed excitable multitudes of Galilee and those intended for a 'teacher of Israel,' the apparent agreement would have been a discord which no argument could explain away (see Introduction).

Ver. 3. *Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except any one have been born anew, he cannot see the king-*

dom of God. Jesus answers his thoughts rather than his words, but the connection between the address and the answer is not hard to find. John the Baptist had familiarised all with the thought that the kingdom of God was at hand, that the reign of the Messiah, so long expected, would soon begin. Whatever meaning may be assigned to the words of ver. 2, we may certainly say that every thoughtful Jew who believed what Nicodemus believed was 'waiting for the kingdom of God.' But the Pharisee's conception of the Messianic promise was false. In great measure, at least, his 'kingdom of God' was outward and carnal, not inward and spiritual,—a privilege of birth, belonging of right to Israel. This false conception Jesus would at once correct, and the gravity of the error is reflected in the solemnity of the language, 'Verily, verily, I say unto thee.'—'Any one.' This more literal rendering is necessary here because of the next verse. Our Lord says simply *any one*. Nicodemus brings in the word 'man,' to give more expressiveness to his reply.

'Have been born anew.' It has been, and still is, a much controverted question whether the Greek word here used should be rendered *again*, or *anew*, or *from above*. 'Again' is certainly inadequate; for, though the word may denote *beginning over again*, *commencing the action afresh*, it cannot express mere repetition. Much may be said in favour of the third rendering, 'from above.' This is the undoubted meaning of the same word as used below (ver. 31); and a similar idea is expressed in the passages of the Gospel (chap. i. 13) and First Epistle of John (chap. ii. 29, v. 1, etc.) which speak of those who are begotten of God. It may also be urged that, as Christ is 'He that cometh from above' (ver. 31), those who through faith are one with Christ must derive their being from the same source, and may well be spoken of as 'born from above.' Notwithstanding these arguments, it is probable that *anew* is the true rendering. Had the other thought been intended, we might surely have expected 'of God' instead of 'from above.' The correspondence between the two members of the sentence would then have been complete; only those who have been *born of God* can see the *kingdom of God*. Further, *born (or begotten) of God* is a very easy and natural expression, but this can hardly be said of *born (or begotten) from above*: 'coming from above' is perfectly clear; 'born from above' is not so. The chief argument, however, is afforded by the next verse, which clearly shows that Nicodemus understood a second birth to be intended. But the words 'except any one have been born from above' would not necessarily imply a second birth. The Jews maintained that they were born of God (see chap. viii. 41), and would have had no difficulty whatever in believing that those only who received their being from above could inherit the blessings of Messiah's kingdom. Our Lord's words, then, teach the fundamental truth, that not natural birth, descent from the stock of Israel, but a second birth, the being begotten anew, a complete spiritual change (see ver. 5), admits into the kingdom of God.

On the general expectation of a king and a kingdom, see chap. i. 49. It is remarkable that the kingdom of God is expressly mentioned by John in this chapter only (compare, however, chap. xviii. 36).—'Cannot' is by no means the same as 'shall not.' It expresses an impossibility in the very nature of things. To a state of outward earthly

privilege rights of natural birth might give admittance. In declaring that without a complete inward change none can possibly see (have a true perception of) 'the kingdom of God,' Jesus declares the spiritual character of His kingdom. In it none but the spiritual can have any part.

Ver. 4. Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter a second time into his mother's womb, and be born? These are the words of a man amazed beyond measure. Jesus has read his thoughts, and the answer to his unspoken question has come with the suddenness and surprise of a thunderbolt. The solemn emphasis laid on the words 'born anew' forbids his thinking of a mere figure of speech, and apparently banishes from his mind the Old Testament expressions which approach the same truth (see ver. 5). The privilege which he attached to natural birth within the bounds of Israel is torn away by a word; the 'any one' of our Lord's answer makes all men equal; and the prize which seemed almost within his grasp is given to every one who has been born anew. In his bewilderment he sees no meaning in the words of Jesus, except they be understood physically of a second natural birth; and the evident impossibility of this he expresses in the very strongest terms.

Ver. 5. Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except any one have been born of water and spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. The answer is a stronger affirmation of the same truth, with some changes of expression which made the words no easier of acceptance, save as the new terms might awaken echoes of Old Testament language, and lead the hearer from the external to an inward and spiritual interpretation.

The first words have given rise to warm and continued controversy. Many have held that the birth 'of water and spirit' can only refer to Christian baptism; others have denied that Christian baptism is alluded to at all. The subject is very important and very difficult. Our only safety lies in making the Evangelist his own interpreter. We shall repeatedly find, when a difficulty occurs, that some word of his own in the context or in some parallel passage brings us light. (1) First, then, as to the very peculiar expression, 'of water and spirit.' We cannot doubt that this is the true rendering; no direct reference is made as yet to the personal Holy Spirit. The words 'water and spirit' are most closely joined, and placed under the government of the same preposition. A little earlier in the Gospel (chap. i. 33) we find the same words—not, indeed, joined together as here, but yet placed in exact parallelism, each word, too, receiving emphasis from the context. Three times between chap. i. 19 and chap. i. 33 John speaks of his baptism with water; twice there is a reference to the Spirit (i. 32, 33); and in ver. 33 John's baptizing with water and our Lord's baptizing with 'holy spirit' (see the note) stand explicitly contrasted. It is very possible that this testimony was well known to others besides John's disciples, to all indeed in Judea who were roused to inquiry respecting the Baptist and his relation to Jesus. (2) It is possible that the Jews of that age may have been familiar with the figure of a new birth in connection with baptism. It is confessedly difficult accurately to ascertain Jewish usages and modes of thought in the time of our Lord. The Talmud indeed contains copious stores of information, but it is not easy to distinguish

between what belongs to an earlier and what to a later age. We know that converts to the Jewish religion were admitted by baptism to fellowship with the sacred people. The whole tenor of the law would suggest such a washing when the uncleanness of heathenism was put off, and hence no rite could be more natural. Yet we have no certain knowledge that this was practised so early as the time of our Lord. There is no doubt that, at a later date, the proselyte thus washed or baptized was spoken of as born again. Here again, therefore, we have some confirmation of the view that in the words before us there is *in some sort* a reference to baptism,—at all events, to the baptism of John. (3) But what was John's baptism? We see from chap. i. 25 how peculiar his action appeared to the rulers of the people. Even if proselytes were in that age baptized, a baptism that invited *all*, publican and Pharisee alike, would but seem the more strange. John's action was new and startling; and from chap. i. 21-25 it appears that the leaders of Jewish thought beheld in it an immediate reference to the time of Messiah. It seems very probable that John's baptism was directly symbolic, a translation into visible symbol of such promises as Ezek. xxxvi. 25, which looked forward to the new spiritual order of which he was the herald. To the sprinkling with clean water, the cleansing from all filthiness, of which Ezekiel speaks, answers closely John's 'baptism of repentance for the remission of sins' (compare also Ezek. xxxvi. 31). To the promise which follows, 'A new spirit will I put within you. . . I will put my spirit within you,' answers just as closely John's testimony to Jesus, 'He it is that baptizeth with holy spirit.' (4) The two contrasted elements in the baptisms of chap. i. 33 are—(a) the covering and removal of past sin; and (b) the inbreathing of a new life. In that verse 'holy spirit' is the gift and not the Giver. The Giver is the Holy Spirit; but the gift, that which is the essential element in the new baptism, is the bestowal of 'holy spirit,' the seed and the principle of a holy spiritual life. (5) These two elements were conjoined in the Christian baptism instituted afterwards: the cleansing of forgiveness through Christ's death and the holiness of the new life in Christ are alike symbolized in it. Here, therefore, our Lord says that no man can enter into the kingdom of God unless he have been born anew, the elements of the new birth being the removal by cleansing of the old sinful life, and the impartation by the Holy Spirit of a new holy principle of life.—If this view of the words is correct, there is error in both extremes of which mention has been made. There is no *direct* reference here to Christian baptism; but the reference to the truths which that baptism expresses is distinct and clear.

Ver. 6. **That which hath been born of the flesh is flesh, and that which hath been born of the Spirit is spirit.** In the last verse was implied the law that like is produced from like, since the pure and spiritual members of God's kingdom must be born of water and spirit. Here this law is expressly stated. Flesh produces flesh. Spirit produces spirit. Thus the necessity of a new birth is enforced, and the 'cannot' of ver. 3 explained. It is not easy to say whether 'flesh,' as here used, definitely indicates the sinful principles of human nature, or only that which is outward, material, not spiritual but merely natural. The latter seems more likely, both from the context (where the con-

trast is between the natural and the spiritual birth) and from John's usage elsewhere. Though the word occurs as many as thirteen times in this Gospel (chap. i. 13, 14, vi. 51, 52, etc., viii. 15, xvii. 2), in no passage does it express the thought of sinfulness, as it does in Paul's Epistles and in 1 John ii. 16. Another difficulty meets us in the second clause. Are we to read 'born of the Spirit' or 'of the spirit'? Is the reference to the Holy Spirit Himself, who imparts the principle of the new life, or to the principle which He imparts,—the principle just spoken of in ver. 5, 'of water and spirit'? It is hard to say, and the difference in meaning is extremely small; but when we consider the analogy of the two clauses, the latter seems more likely.—There is no reference here to 'water;' but, as we have seen, the water has reference to the past alone,—the state which gives place to the new life. To speak of this would be beside the point of the verse now before us, which teaches that the spiritual life of the kingdom of God can only come from the new spiritual principle.

Ver. 7. **Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born anew.** Nicodemus had no doubt shown by look or exclamation his astonishment at hearing such words, containing so strange a view of the kingdom of God and the conditions on which it could be entered. The use of 'marvel' in other passages would seem to show that in this Gospel the word indicates much more than amazement. It is certainly not the astonishment of admiration, but incredulous and sometimes angry surprise. Our Lord's teaching had set at naught the accepted teaching of Israel, thoughts and hopes to which Nicodemus had long and firmly clung, and his heart rebels. Our Lord, according to His wont, does but the more emphatically affirm the truth at which Nicodemus stumbled. 'Ye must be born again:' the necessity is absolute. Before, He had spoken of 'any one,' leaving the application to His hearer; now, as Nicodemus had said 'We know,' Jesus says 'Ye must,'—even ye who possess the treasures of Israel's learning, and whom the signs are guiding to the King of Israel, 'ye must be born again:' 'Marvel not at this.'

Ver. 8. The words of this verse point out to Nicodemus *why* he must not thus 'marvel' at the new teaching,—must not cast it away with incredulous surprise. Nature itself may teach him. In nature there is an agent whose working is experienced and acknowledged by all, while at the same time it is full of mystery; yet the mystery makes no man doubt the reality of the working.

The wind breatheth where it listeth, and thou hearest the voice thereof, but knowest not whence it cometh and whither it goeth. From the beginning the wind seems to have been the divinely-intended witness and emblem in the natural world of the Spirit of God. Ever present, it bore a constant witness. A commentator (Tholuck) has conjectured that, whilst Jesus spoke, there was heard the sound of the wind as it swept through the narrow street of the city, thus furnishing an occasion for the comparison here. It may well have been so; every reader of the Gospels may see how willingly our Lord drew lessons from natural objects around Him. Such a conjecture might help to explain the abruptness with which the meaning of the word is changed, the very same word which in vers. 5 and 6 was rendered *spirit* being now used in the sense of wind. Nothing but the abruptness of this transition needs any

explanation. The appointed emblem teaches the lesson for which it was appointed. The choice of terms (*breatheth, listeth, voice*) shows that the wind is personified. It is perhaps of the gentle breeze rather than of the violent blast that the words speak (for the word *pneuma* is used with much more latitude in the Greek Bible than in classical Greek); in the *breath* of wind there is even more mystery than in the *blast*. Thou hearest its voice, it is present though invisible; thou feelest its power, for thou art in its course; but where the course begins, what produces the breath,—whither the course is tending, what is the object of the breath,—thou knowest not. Nicodemus, unable to question this, would remember Old Testament words which spoke of man's not knowing 'the way of the wind' as illustrating man's ignorance of the Creator's works (Eccles. xi. 5).

So is every one that hath been born of the Spirit. As in the natural, so is it in the spiritual world. The wind breatheth where it listeth; the Spirit breatheth where He will. Thou hearest the sound of the wind, but canst not fix the limits of its course, experiencing only that thou thyself art in that course: every one that hath been born of the Spirit knows that His influence is real, experiencing that influence in himself, but can trace His working no farther,—knows not the beginning or the end of His course. Our Lord does not speak of the birth itself, but of the resulting state. The birth itself belongs to a region beyond the outward and the sensible, just as none can tell whence the breath of wind has come.

It ought perhaps to be noted before leaving this verse, that many take the first part of the verse as having reference to the Spirit, not the wind: 'The Spirit breatheth where He will, and thou hearest His voice, but knowest not whence He cometh and whither He goeth; so is every one that hath been born of the Spirit.' The chief arguments in favour of this translation are the following:—(1) It does not involve a sudden transition from one meaning to another of the same Greek word. (2) On the ordinary view there is some confusion in the comparison: the words are not, 'The wind breatheth where . . . so is the Spirit;' but, 'The wind breatheth where . . . so is every one that hath been born of the Spirit.' These two arguments have substantially been dealt with above. As to the first point—the sudden transition from the thought of spirit to that of its emblem in nature—perhaps no more need be said. The second argument has not much real weight. The language is condensed, it is true, and the words corresponding to the first clause ('The wind bloweth where it listeth') are not directly expressed, but have to be supplied in thought. The chief comparison, however, is between the 'thou' of the first member and the 'every one' of the second, as we have already seen. On the other hand, the difficulties presented by the new translation are serious, but we cannot here follow them in detail.

Ver. 9. Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these things come to pass? The tone of this answer is very different from that of verse 4. Here, as there, the question is, *How can* . . . ? But there the added words show that the meaning is, 'It is impossible' (comp. Luke i. 18); whereas in this verse the chief stress lies on the first word 'How' (comp. Luke i. 34). The offended astonishment of Nicodemus (ver. 7) has yielded to the words of Jesus. He now under-

stands that Jesus really means that there is such a thing as a new spiritual birth, in contrast with that natural birth which had ever seemed to him the only necessary condition of entrance into the kingdom of Messiah. Still, as ver. 12 shows, the victory over unbelief is not yet complete.

Ver. 10. Jesus answered and said unto him, Thou art the teacher of Israel; and perceivest thou not these things? The question which expressed the bewilderment of Nicodemus is answered by another question. He has assumed the office of teacher, teacher of God's people Israel, and yet he does not recognise these truths. 'Israel' is a word used only four times in this Gospel, and never without special meaning. We have seen its significance in i. 31 and 49; and chap. xii. 13 is similar. The only remaining passage is that before us. No word so clearly brings into view the nation of God's special choice. The name carries us back from a time of degeneracy and decadence to past days of hope and promise. It was to Israel that God showed His statutes and His judgments (Ps. cxlvii. 19), and this thought is very prominent here. Of Israel thus possessed of the very truths to which Jesus had made reference (see above, on ver. 5) Nicodemus is 'the teacher.' It is not simply 'a teacher,' though it is not very easy to say what the presence of the article denotes. It is possible that Nicodemus occupied a superior position, or was held in especial honour amongst the doctors of the law; or the words may merely imply that he magnified his office and was proud to be teacher of God's people. Surely from him might have been expected such knowledge of the Scriptures and insight into their meaning that the truth of the words just spoken by Jesus would at once be recognised. For our Lord does not say 'and knowest not'; Nicodemus is not blamed for any want of previous knowledge of these things, but because he does not perceive the truth of the teaching when presented to him,—and presented, moreover, by One whose right to teach with authority he had himself confessed. It will be observed that Jesus does not answer the 'How' of the preceding question; that had been answered by anticipation. In ver. 8 Jesus had declared that the manner must be a mystery to man, whereas the fact was beyond all doubt. The fact was known to every one that had been born of the Spirit, but to such only. Hence in the following verse we have a renewed and more emphatic affirmation of the truth and certainty of what has been said. If Nicodemus would really know the fact, it must be by the knowledge of experience.—He appears no further in this narrative. The last words have reduced him to silence,—thoughtful silence, we cannot doubt,—but have not brought him to complete belief.

Ver. 11. Verily, verily, I say unto thee. These words form the solemn introduction to a new division, a higher stage, of the discourse. The connecting link between vers. 10 and 11 is reproof. The last verse laid stress on the knowledge which should have prepared the teacher of Israel for the reception of the word of Jesus; in this the emphasis lies on the dignity of the Teacher whose word he had been so slow to receive.

We speak that which we know, and bear witness of that which we have seen. The sudden transition to the plural 'we know' is remarkable. We cannot suppose that our Lord here joins with Himself the prophets of the Old Covenant, or

John the Baptist, or that He is speaking of the testimony of the Father and the Holy Spirit. The key to the plural is found in ver. 8. Every one who dwells in the spiritual world of which Jesus has been speaking is a witness to its reality and its wonders. Here then Jesus associates with Himself in this emphatic testimony all who have been born of the Spirit. It is further to be observed that the change of expression is peculiarly appropriate, since he is about to pass away from the direct address to Nicodemus himself, and to speak through him to the class to which he belonged. Nicodemus had at first said 'we know' (ver. 2), as representative of others like-minded with himself, who by the signs had been led to faith in the name of Jesus, but were ignorant of His spiritual work. Jesus now contrasts with these another class, consisting of all who from their own experience could join Him in His testimony to the reality of the spiritual kingdom. The words of Jesus in chap. ix. 4 are equally remarkable in their association of His people with Himself.—The two parallel members of this verse bring the truth expressed into bold relief. The words closely correspond (*knowing to speaking, seeing to bearing witness*), while there is at the same time an advance in the thought, since *bearing witness* rises above *speaking*, and *we have seen* is more expressive than *we know*. In ver. 8, where the wind was taken as the emblem of the Spirit, the sense which bore witness was that of hearing. This verse speaks of something more convincing still, the sense of sight.

**And ye receive not our witness.** To such sayings of his Master we may trace the mournful reflections which are again and again made by the Evangelist (see i. 11, iii. 32, xii. 37). Though the reference is to a class ('ye receive'), yet the words seem to imply that some unbelief still lingered in the heart of Nicodemus himself.

**Ver. 12. If I told you the earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you the heavenly things?** Here our Lord returns to the singular, 'I told'; for He is not now speaking of the witness of experience, but of instruction which He Himself had personally given. It seems hardly possible, however, that our Lord simply refers to words just spoken. In saying 'If I told you the earthly things, and ye believe not,' He plainly refers to unbelief *after instruction*,—unbelief which instruction failed to remove. But if Nicodemus came alone (and there is no doubt that he did), he alone had received this last instruction. Others might be described as unbelievers, but not as *remaining in unbelief* after having heard the teaching concerning the new birth. We are compelled, therefore, to suppose that our Lord spoke generally of previous discourses to the Jews, and not specifically of these His latest words.

But what are the earthly and the heavenly things? Many answers have been given which are little more than arbitrary conjectures. Again the Evangelist must be his own interpreter. As in the next verse 'heaven' is not used figuratively, it cannot be maintained that 'heavenly' is figurative here. The words 'earthly' and 'heavenly' must have their simple meaning, 'what is upon earth,' 'what is in heaven.' The things that are in heaven can only be made known by Him who has been in heaven; this is suggested by the connection between this verse and the next. When we come to the last section of the chapter,

we shall find that it contains (in some degree) a comment upon these verses. Now there (in ver. 32) we read of Him 'that cometh out of heaven, who 'bears witness of what He has seen and heard,'—who being sent from God 'speaketh the words of God' (ver. 34). But this same comment takes note of the converse also. Contrasted with Him who comes from heaven is 'he that is out of the earth' and 'speaketh out of the earth' (ver. 31). Combining these explanatory words, we may surely say that 'the heavenly things' are those truths which He who cometh from heaven, and He alone, can reveal, which are the words of God revealing His counsels by the Divine Son now come. The things on earth, in like manner, are the truths whose home is earth, so to speak, which were known before God revealed Himself by Him who is in the bosom of the Father (chap. i. 18). They are 'earthly,' not as belonging to the world of sin or the world of sense, but as being things which the prophet or teacher who has never ascended into heaven, but whose origin and home are the earth, can reach, though not necessarily by his own unaided powers. In His former discourses to the Jews, Jesus would seem not to have gone beyond the circle of truth already revealed. Even in His words to Nicodemus He mainly dwells on that which the Scriptures of the Old Testament had taught; and He reproves the teacher of Israel who did not at once recognise His words, thus founded on the Old Testament, as truth. The kingdom of God, the necessity of repentance and faith, the new heart, the holy life, the need at once of cleansing and of quickening—these and other truths, once indeed inhabitants of heaven, had long been naturalised on earth. Having been revealed, they belonged to men, whereas the secret things belong unto the Lord (Deut. xxix. 29). Those of whom our Lord spoke had yielded a partial belief, but the 'believing' of which He here speaks is a perfect faith. Nicodemus was a believer, and yet not a believer. If some of the truths hitherto declared had been so imperfectly received, though those who were mighty in the Scriptures ought to have recognised them as already taught, almost as part of the law that was given through Moses (chap. i. 17), how would it be when He spoke of the things hitherto secret, coming directly out of the heaven which He opens (comp. chap. i. 51), and for the first time revealed in Him,—part of the 'truth' that 'came through Jesus Christ' (chap. i. 17).—It will be seen, then, that the truth of ver. 5 would seem to be placed by Jesus rather amongst the 'earthly' than amongst the 'heavenly' things. Of some of the heavenly things He proceeds to speak (vers. 14, 15).

**Ver. 13. And no one hath ascended up into heaven, but he that came down out of heaven, the Son of man.** The connection is this: 'How will ye believe if I tell you the heavenly things? And it is from me alone that ye can learn them. No one can tell the heavenly things unless he has been in heaven, and no one has been in heaven and come down to earth save myself.' Repeatedly does our Lord in this Gospel speak of His coming down out of heaven (vi. 33, 38, etc.), using the very word that we meet with here; and hence it is impossible to give the phrase a merely figurative sense. He came forth from the Father, and came into the world (xvi. 28), that He might declare the Father (chap. i. 18) and speak unto the world what He had heard from Him (chap. viii. 26).

But this requires that we take the other verb 'hath ascended up' in its literal sense, and then the words seem to imply that Jesus had already ascended into heaven. '*Hath ascended up*' cannot refer to His future ascension; and there is no foundation for the view held by some, that within the limits of His ministry on earth He was ever literally taken up into heaven. What, then, is the meaning? There are several passages in which the words 'save' or 'except' present the same difficulty. One of the most familiar is Luke iv. 27, where it seems at first strange to read, 'Many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet, and none of them was cleansed saving Naaman the Syrian,'—no leper of Israel cleansed except a leper who was not of Israel! The mind is so fixed on the lepers and their cleansing, that the other words 'of them' are not carried on in thought to the last clause: 'none of them was cleansed,'—indeed, no leper was cleansed save 'Naaman the Syrian.' So also in the preceding verse (Luke iv. 26). In other passages (such as Gal. ii. 16; Rev. xxi. 27) the same peculiarity exists, but it is not apparent in the Authorised Version. The verse before us is exactly similar. The special thought is not the having gone up into heaven, but the *having been in heaven*. This was the qualification for revealing the truths which are here spoken of as heavenly things. But none (none, that is, of the sons of men; for this is a general maxim, the exception is not brought in till afterwards) could be in heaven without ascending from earth to heaven. No one has gone up into heaven, and by thus being in heaven obtained the knowledge of heavenly things; and, indeed, no one has been in heaven save He that came down out of heaven, the Son of man. Observe how insensibly our Lord has passed into the revelation of the heavenly things themselves. He could not speak of His power to reveal without speaking of that which is first and chief of all the heavenly things, viz. that He Himself came down out of heaven to be the Son of man (on the name 'Son of man' see chap. i. 51). The reference to our Lord's humanity is here strikingly in place. He came down from heaven and became the Son of man to reveal these heavenly truths and (vers. 14, 15) to give the heavenly blessings unto man.

The weight of evidence compels us to believe that the concluding words of this verse, as it stands in the Authorised Version, were not written by John. We can only suppose that they were a very early comment on, or addition to, the text, first written in the margin, then by mistake joined to the text. Were they genuine, they would probably refer to the abiding presence of the Son with the Father; but in such a sense it is very improbable that 'Son of man' would have been the name chosen. At all events, we have no other example of the same kind.

Vers. 14, 15. *And as Moses lifted on high the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted on high, that every one that believeth may in him have eternal life.* These verses continue the revelation of the heavenly things. The first truth is, that He who was in heaven came down to earth to be the Son of man. The next is, that the Son of man must be exalted, but in no such manner as the eager hopes of Nicodemus imagined. The secret counsel of heaven was, that He who was with God should as Son of man be lifted on high, as the serpent was lifted on high by

Moses in the wilderness. Thus, indeed, it 'must be, that He may become the Giver of eternal life.—The word rendered 'lifted on high' occurs fifteen times in other parts of the New Testament, sometimes in such proverbial sayings as Matt. xxiii. 12, sometimes in reference to the exaltation of our Lord (Acts ii. 33, v. 31). In this Gospel we find it in three verses besides the present. The general usage of the word in the New Testament and the Old is sufficient to show that it cannot here signify merely raising or lifting up. And yet John's own explanation forbids us to exclude this thought. All the passages in his Gospel which connect the word with the Son of man must clearly be taken together; and chap. xii. 33 (see note there) declares that the word contains a reference to the mode of the Saviour's death—the elevation on the cross. Nicodemus looked for the exaltation of the King in the coming kingdom of God. Exalted He shall be, not like the monarch sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, amid pomp and splendour, but receiving His true power and glory at the time when He hangs upon a tree an object of shame. The brazen serpent, made in the likeness of the destroyer, placed on a standard and held up to the gaze of all, might seem fitted only to call forth execration from those who were reminded of their peril, scorn and contempt from those who saw but a powerless symbol; but the dying Israelite looked thereon and lived. The looking was a type of faith—nay, it was itself an act of faith in the promise of God. The serpent was raised on high that *all* might look on it; the exaltation of the Son of man, which begins with the shame of the cross, has for its object the giving of life to *all* (compare chap. xii. 32, and also Heb. ii. 9).—'That every one that believeth.' At first our Lord closely follows the words spoken in ver. 12. As there we read, 'Ye believe not,' so here, 'He that believeth:' as yet no qualifying word is added to deepen the significance of the 'belief.' What is before us is the general thought of receiving the word of Jesus. In that all is in truth included; for he that truly receives His word finds that its first and chief requirement is faith in Jesus Himself. So here, the trust is first general, but the thought of fellowship and union, so characteristic of this Gospel, comes in immediately, 'that every one that believeth *may in Him* have eternal life.' These verses which reveal the heavenly truths contain the very first mention of 'eternal life,' the blessing of which John, echoing his Master's words, is ever speaking. 'Eternal life' is a *present* possession for the believer (comp. ver. 36); its essence is union with God in Christ. See especially chap. xvii. 3; 1 John i. 2, v. 11.

The result of the interview with Nicodemus is not recorded, but the subsequent mention of him in the Gospel can leave no doubt upon our mind that, whether at this moment or not, he eventually embraced the truth. It would seem that, as the humiliation of Jesus deepened, he yielded the more to that truth against which at the beginning of this conversation he would most have rebelled. It is the persecution of Jesus that draws him forward in His defence (vii. 51); it is when Jesus has been lifted up on the cross that he comes to pay Him honour (xix. 39). He is thus a trophy, not of the power of signs alone, but of the power of the heavenly things taught by Jesus.

At this point an important question arises. Are the next five verses a continuation of the preceding

discourse? Are they words of Jesus or a reflection by the Evangelist himself upon his Master's words? Most commentators have taken the former view. The latter was first suggested by Erasmus, and has found favour with many thoughtful writers on this Gospel. And with reason. The first suggestion of a sudden break in the discourse may be startling, but a close examination of the verses will show that they present distinct traces of belonging to John:—(1) Their general style and character remind us of the Prologue. (2) The past tenses 'loved' and 'were' in ver. 19 at once recall chap. i. 10, 11; and are generally more in harmony with the tone of the Evangelist's later reflections than with that of the Redeemer's discourse. (3) In ver. 11 Jesus says, 'ye receive not our testimony:' in ver. 19 the impression produced is not that of a present refusal, but rather of a past and continued rejection. (4) In no other place is the appellation 'only begotten' used by Jesus Himself in regard to the Son, though it is used by the Evangelist in chap. i. 14, i. 18, and I John iv. 9. It cannot be fairly said that there is anything really strange in the introduction of these reflections. It is altogether in the manner of this writer to comment on what he has related (see especially xii. 37-41); and in at least one instance he passes suddenly, without any mark of transition, from the words of another to his own,—for very few will suppose chap. i. 16 to be a continuation of the Baptist's testimony (ver. 15). The view now advocated will receive strong confirmation if we convince the reader that there is a similar break after ver. 30 in this chapter, the last six verses belonging to the author of the Gospel and not to the Baptist.

Ver. 16. **For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that every one that believeth in him may not perish, but have eternal life.** In the preceding verses is recorded the first announcement of the Gospel by our Lord, the revelation of the mystery made manifest by Him who came out of heaven. John pauses to set his Master's words in the light in which he himself had afterwards beheld them. Jesus had said 'must be lifted on high,' but had given no reason. His disciple, whose message to the church was 'God is love' (I John iv. 16), refers back the necessity to this truth. Whatever remains still hidden, so much as this is certain, that the humiliation and exaltation of Him who came down out of heaven were the expression of God's love to the whole world. The Son of man is the Son of God, the only begotten Son; the one term expresses His fitness for the work, the other points to His dignity and to the greatness of the Father's love. In this love the Father gave the Son: *to what* He surrendered Him is not here said; our Lord's own words (ver. 14) fill up the meaning. The universality of the blessing is marked with twofold emphasis; designed, not for Israel only, but for the whole world, it is the actual possession of every believer. The words relating to faith are more definite than in ver. 14; for (see chap. ii. 11) to 'believe in Him' points to a trust which casts itself on Him and presses into union with Him.—The Divine purpose is presented under two aspects, not one only (as in ver. 15); it is that the believer may be saved from perdition, and may now possess eternal life.—This verse contains most of the leading terms of John's theology. One only of these requires further comment, on account of the vari-

ous senses in which it is employed by the Evangelist. The 'world' does not in this verse designate those who had received and rejected the offer of salvation. It is thought of as at an earlier stage of its history; the light is not yet presented by the acceptance or rejection of which the final state of the world shall be determined.

Ver. 17. **For God sent not the Son into the world that he may judge the world; but that the world through him may be saved.** The thought of the last verse is expanded. There it was the gift of God's love that was brought before us; now it is the mission of the Son. To 'may perish' (ver. 16) here corresponds 'may judge the world, to 'have eternal life' answers 'may be saved.' This alone is sufficient to show that the word 'judge,' though not in itself equivalent to 'condemn,' has reference to a judgment which tends to condemnation. The Jews believed that Messiah would come to glorify Israel, but to judge the Gentiles; the solemn and emphatic repetition of 'the world' rebukes all such limitations, as effectually as the words of ver. 3 set aside the distinctions which were present to the thought of Nicodemus.—It may seem hard to reconcile the first part of this verse with v. 22, 27, ix. 39, xii. 48. We must, however, recognise a twofold purpose in Christ's coming. He came to save, not to judge the world. He came to judge the world in so far as it will not allow itself to be saved; and this judgment is one that takes place even now (because even now there is wilful unbelief), though it will only be consummated hereafter.

Ver. 18. **He that believeth in him is not judged: he that believeth not hath been judged already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.** The two preceding verses express the Divine purpose in itself, and that purpose passing into accomplishment; this verse speaks of the actual result. Two of the terms of these verses, the *believing in Jesus* of ver. 16 and the *judging* of ver. 17, are here brought together. He that abides in faith in Christ abides in a state to which judging belongs not; whilst the faith remains, the idea of judgment is excluded, for the believer is one with the Lord in whom he has placed his trust. Not so with the unbeliever; on him the sentence of judgment is already pronounced. As long as the unbelief is persisted in, so long does the sentence which the rejection of Jesus brings with it remain in force against him. The great idea of the Gospel, the division of all men into two classes severed from each other, is very clearly presented here; but no *unchangeable* division is thought of. The separation is the result of deliberate choice; and whilst the choice is adhered to, the severance abides.—As the faith of the believer is faith 'in Him,' faith that brings personal union, the unbelief is the rejection of His Person revealed in all its dignity, the only begotten Son of God.

Ver. 19. **And this is the judgment,—the judgment is of this kind, takes place thus,—because the light is come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light, for their works were wicked.** These words bring out clearly that the 'not believing' spoken of in the last verse signifies an active rejection, and not the mere absence of belief—a rejection of the true light which in the person of Jesus came into the world, and henceforth ever is in the world. Men loved the darkness, for their works—not single deeds, but

the whole expression and manifestation of their life—were wicked. The word used ('wicked') is that which elsewhere expresses the character of the arch-enemy as 'the wicked one' (John xvii. 15; 1 John iii. 12). It denotes active evil, positive and pronounced wickedness.

Ver. 20. For every one that committeth evil hateth the light, and he cometh not to the light lest his works should be convicted. This verse explains the last, and refers the action there described to a general principle. The universal law is, that he who committeth evil hateth the light. Not 'he that hath committed,' for what is spoken of is the bent and the spirit of the man's life. The word 'evil' here is not the same as that rendered 'wicked' in ver. 19, but is more general. The one word means evil in active manifestation; the other what is worthless, good for nothing. No doubt the second word is used in this verse partly for the sake of vivid contrast with the real and abiding 'truth' of ver. 21, partly because what is worthless and unsubstantial will not stand the test of coming to that very light which shows in all its reality whatever is substantial and true. Every one whose life is thus evil knows that in the presence of the light he must stand self-condemned. The experience is painful, and he endeavours to avoid it by turning from the light, till, as conscience still asserts its power, he seeks defence against himself by hating the light (compare 1 Kings xxii. 8). We must not forget the application that is in John's mind. The light that is come is Jesus Himself. He is come; but men also must come to Him. If they came not, the cause was a moral one. Before He came, some light had been in the world (i. 5); those who, living a life of evil (whether open wickedness or a worthless self-righteousness), hated this light, were thus prepared to reject the Light Himself.—The last word of the verse is remarkable, as it is more naturally applied to the doer than to his deed. Not only will the works be

shown by the light—be exposed in their true character: the works are looked on as of themselves the criminals—they will be self-convicted, self-condemned. The thought of *self-conviction* has in this Gospel an importance that can hardly be over-estimated.

Ver. 21. But he that doeth the truth cometh to the light, that his works may be made manifest, because they have been wrought in God. In contrast with those who commit evil is another class—those who do the truth. The words expressing *action* in vers. 20, 21, are different: that in ver. 20 ('committeth') refers directly to the particular acts, that which is used here (which properly denotes *to make, to produce*) brings into view rather the result. The man here spoken of is (so to speak) at work in raising the abiding structure of 'the truth.' So far as the truth has been revealed to him, his life is faithful to it; his works are an expression of the truth that is in his heart. As Jesus says (chap. xviii. 37), 'Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice;' so here we read, 'He that doeth the truth cometh to the light.' There is a natural affinity between truth and light; he who is faithful to truth received is, through the very nature of the truth within him, impelled towards Him who is the Truth. He does not come to the light that his works may be made known to others: there is no self-seeking,—perhaps even it is not the conscious purpose of the man himself that is spoken of, but rather the instinctive aim of the truth within him, and thus in reality the purpose of God, that all the works of God be made manifest. The works of this doer of truth have been wrought in God. The discipline by which he is led to the Son is of the Father (see chap. vi. especially). For this cause he comes, and must needs come, at the bidding of the truth, that the works of God in him may be brought out of all concealment and made manifest. His coming to Christ is itself a manifestation of the preceding work of God in him.

### CHAPTER III. 22-36.

#### *The Passing away of the Baptist in the presence of the True Bridegroom of the Church.*

22 **A**FTER these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judea; and there he tarried with them, <sup>a</sup> and <sup>a</sup> Chap. iv. 2.  
 23 baptized. And John also was baptizing in Ænon near to Salim, because there was much water<sup>1</sup> there: <sup>b</sup> and they came, <sup>b</sup> Matt. iii. 5.  
 24 and were baptized. For <sup>c</sup> John was not yet cast into prison. <sup>c</sup> Matt. xiv. 3.  
 25 Then there arose<sup>2</sup> a question between *some* of John's disciples  
 26 and the Jews<sup>3</sup> about <sup>d</sup> purifying. And they came unto John, <sup>d</sup> Chap. ii. 6.  
 and said unto him, 'Rabbi, he that was with thee <sup>e</sup> beyond <sup>e</sup> Chap. i. 38.  
 Jordan, <sup>f</sup> to whom thou barest<sup>4</sup> witness, behold, <sup>f</sup> Chap. i. 28.  
<sup>g</sup> the same <sup>g</sup> Chap. i. 7.  
<sup>h</sup> <sup>h</sup> Chap. iv. 1.

<sup>1</sup> were many waters

<sup>2</sup> There arose therefore

<sup>3</sup> a questioning on the part of John's disciples with a Jew

<sup>4</sup> hast borne



27 baptizeth, and <sup>1</sup> all *men* come to him. John answered and said, <sup>2</sup> A man can receive nothing, except it be <sup>3</sup> given him from <sup>4</sup> heaven. Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, <sup>5</sup> I am not the Christ, but <sup>6</sup> that I <sup>7</sup> am sent before him. He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but <sup>8</sup> the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is <sup>9</sup> fulfilled. <sup>10</sup> He must increase, but I *must* decrease.

31 <sup>11</sup> He that cometh from above <sup>12</sup> is above all: he that is of <sup>13</sup> the earth is earthly, <sup>14</sup> and speaketh of the earth: <sup>15</sup> he that cometh from <sup>16</sup> heaven is above all. <sup>17</sup> And what he hath seen and heard, <sup>18</sup> that he testifieth; <sup>19</sup> and <sup>20</sup> no man receiveth his testimony. <sup>21</sup> He that hath <sup>22</sup> received his testimony <sup>23</sup> hath set to his seal <sup>24</sup> that God is true. <sup>25</sup> For he whom God hath <sup>26</sup> sent speaketh the <sup>27</sup> words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure <sup>28</sup> unto him. <sup>29</sup> The Father loveth the Son, and <sup>30</sup> hath given all things into his hand. <sup>31</sup> He that believeth on <sup>32</sup> the Son hath everlasting <sup>33</sup> life: and he that <sup>34</sup> believeth <sup>35</sup> not the Son shall not see life; but <sup>36</sup> the wrath of God abideth on him.

<sup>5</sup> have been                      <sup>6</sup> out of                      <sup>7</sup> but, I                      <sup>8</sup> hath been  
<sup>9</sup> out of                      <sup>10</sup> out of the earth                      <sup>11</sup> out of the earth he speaketh  
<sup>12</sup> omit is above all                      <sup>13</sup> beareth witness of what he hath seen and heard  
<sup>14</sup> witness                      <sup>15</sup> omit hath  
<sup>16</sup> for hath . . . seal read set his seal to this,  
<sup>17</sup> for not by measure giveth he the Spirit  
<sup>18</sup> in                      <sup>19</sup> eternal                      <sup>20</sup> but he that obeyeth

CONTENTS. This section affords us our last view of the great Forerunner when, at the moment of his disappearance, he utters his highest testimony to Jesus as the true Bridegroom of the Church, alone to be welcomed by all waiting hearts. Hence it immediately precedes Christ's proclamation of His truth beyond Judea. The subordinate parts are—(1) vers. 22-30; (2) vers. 31-36.

Ver. 2. After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judea; and there he tarried with them, and baptized. The introductory words 'After these things' may possibly include a considerable period. Apparently several months intervened between the Passover of chap. ii. 13 and the visit to Samaria (chap. iv.); but only two events belonging to this period are related. The words of this verse, however (*tarried and baptized*), show that after leaving Jerusalem Jesus remained for some length of time in the country parts of Judea. In no other passage than this is there any mention of the Saviour's baptizing, and chap. iv. 2 explains that this baptism was only indirectly His. Still, however, it is clear that the baptism was by the authority of Jesus, the disciples acting only as His ministers. Yet they did not baptize with Christian baptism in the full sense of the term. They were engaged in preparatory work like that of the Baptist, just as the Twelve were sent forth by Jesus to declare the very message which John had preached (Matt. x. 7). The baptism of the Spirit was still future (chap. vii. 39). The next

verse shows the main design of this section. When Jesus baptized in Judea, He came into direct and necessary comparison with John.

Ver. 23. And John also was baptizing in *Ænon* near to Salim, because there were many waters there: and they came and were baptized. Where *Ænon* and Salim were situated it is not easy to determine. The position assigned them by Eusebius and Jerome, near the northern boundary of Samaria, does not agree well with ver. 22. It is more probable that Salim is the Shilhim (translated Salem in the LXX.) of Josh. xv. 32, a town not far from the southern limit of Judea. In this verse of Joshua (in the Hebrew) Shilhim is directly followed by *Ain*, from which *Ænon* differs only in being an intensive form—*Ain* denoting a *spring*, and *Ænon*, *springs*. The objection to this identification is that, as John was clearly in the neighbourhood of Jesus, it takes the latter from the route leading to Samaria and Galilee. But the history of the events of the period is so brief and fragmentary that this objection has not much weight. John no doubt alludes to the meaning of *Ænon* when he adds that there were 'many waters' there.

Ver. 24. For John was not yet cast into prison. Words in which the Evangelist vindicates the accuracy of his narrative, and corrects a mistake apparently prevailing in the Church when he wrote. The earlier Gospels, dealing mainly with the Galilean work of Jesus, do not mention His entering upon His public ministry until after the

Baptist had been delivered up. This seems to have led to an impression that the Baptist was imprisoned before our Lord entered on His public work. The false inference is here corrected.

Ver. 25. *There arose therefore a questioning on the part of John's disciples with a Jew about purifying.* In the circumstances just described, discussion would inevitably arise as to the relative position and value of the two baptisms. A 'Jew' (see note on chap. i. 19) had placed the baptism of Jesus above that of John in regard to its purifying power. Although the Jews in general were hostile to Jesus, this man may have shared the convictions of Nicodemus (vers. 1, 2). The disciples of John refused to regard their master's baptism as less efficacious than that of another, who had been himself baptized by him. Unable either to set the question at rest, or to ignore the opposition of the Jew, they brought the matter of contention before John. On the symbolic character of John's baptism, see the note on ver. 5; on 'purification,' see ii. 6, xiii. 10, xv. 3, and 1 John i. 7, 9.

Ver. 26. *And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou hast borne witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to him.* Their description of Jesus (whom they do not name) shows their feelings. This man came to thee beyond Jordan, it has been thy great object to magnify his fame; and yet he is now thy rival, he baptizes, and all are flocking to him rather than to thee. Their last words are in their lips but a natural exaggeration; to the Evangelist, however, they are an unconscious prophecy (see an exactly similar instance in xii. 19, 20). This is the last trial of the Baptist's fidelity to his mission, and nobly it is sustained.

Ver. 27. *John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it have been given him out of heaven.* Not for a moment does he enter into their jealous advocacy of his claims. Understanding the true force of their hasty words, 'All men come to him,' he tells them that such honour, such position, Jesus cannot receive unless it have been given Him from heaven. He says this in words so general that they seem certainly intended to point to himself also. 'Each of us, in accomplishing God's work, will receive the place appointed to him from heaven.'

Ver. 28. *Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but, I am sent before him.* The acceptance of the lower place was no new thing to John. 'Ye remind me that I have borne witness to Him; ye yourselves bear witness to me, that my testimony to Him contained in it all that now offends you.' Of the two sayings here quoted, one ('I am not the Christ') is to be found in i. 20: the other is not given in this Gospel in the very words, but is implied in i. 30, 31, and no doubt had been expressly uttered by John to his disciples.

Ver. 29. *He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore hath been fulfilled.* He that hath the bride,' he and no other, 'is the bridegroom. The Lord is taking home His bride—His people. To the name of bridegroom I have no claim, nor can I have the bridegroom's joy. But in his joy his friends must needs share. The friend of the bridegroom that standeth and heareth his voice,

catching the first sound as he draws near, listening to the words and tones in which his joy breaks forth throughout the marriage feast, he too has his joy, a reflection of the rejoicing of the bridegroom: this joy is mine, and it is now filled to the full.' In these exquisitely tender and beautiful words does the Baptist at once reprove the natural but petty jealousies of his disciples and set forth his own relation to Jesus. The image employed is common in the Old Testament (Isa. liv.; Jer. iii., xxxi.; Hos. ii.; Ezek. xvi., xxiii.), even if nothing be said of the Song of Solomon, and is taken up in the New (Matt. ix. 15, xxv.; 2 Cor. xi.; Eph. v.; Rev. xix., xxi.). By the 'friend' John does not mean the particular friend who presided over the marriage ceremonies (the Shosben), for the words 'standeth and heareth' are unsuitable to a functionary whose duties were those of action. But these words exactly correspond to the position of the Baptist as one who stood apart and listened. Once only does the Forerunner seem to have met with Jesus: afterwards he watched His course and rejoiced, and pointed his disciples to His Lord.

Ver. 30. *He must increase, but I must decrease.* What the disciples now see is but the beginning of a process that must continue. The necessity spoken of here is another statement of the heavenly gift of ver. 27. John must become less and less, whilst the glory of his Lord will increase without limit or end; and thus his 'decreasing' is not the failure but the accomplishment of his work.

It is quite impossible to read carefully the following verses without perceiving that they bear a remarkable resemblance to the early part of the chapter, and that the general style and language are those of the Evangelist himself. In ver. 31 we read of Him 'that cometh out of heaven;' in ver. 13 of Him 'that came down out of heaven.' That He who is from heaven beareth witness of what He hath seen, and that His witness is not received, we read both in ver. 32 and in ver. 11. The 35th verse might perhaps seem to contain Christ's own words, but not such as the Baptist would be likely to employ. So also in ver. 36 all the terms used, 'he that believeth in,' 'the Son' (standing absolutely), 'eternal life,' 'hath eternal life,' remind us of the language of the Evangelist himself and of Christ's discourses as related in this Gospel, especially in this chapter (vers. 15, 16, 17), but it is hardly possible to suppose them used by John the Baptist. Those writers who cannot admit that there is a break after ver. 30 are constrained to confess that the Baptist's subsequent words are expressed in the Evangelist's own language and style. It is a far simpler and more probable theory that the Evangelist (as in i. 16 and iii. 16—see notes there) passes from his narrative into a meditation which it suggests, gathering together the main thoughts of the two sections which precede.

Ver. 31. *He that cometh from above is above all: he that is out of the earth is out of the earth, and out of the earth he speaketh.* The claim of the Baptist's disciples that to their master should be accorded a higher place than to Jesus, and John's emphatic testimony to his own lower station, lead the Evangelist to reflect upon the words of Jesus to Nicodemus as decisive of all such questions. 'He that cometh from above' and 'He that cometh out of heaven' are clearly the same as

'He that came down out of heaven' (ver. 13), and all three expressions are designations of Jesus. There is but One who thus 'cometh from above' (though many others have received their mission from above), and He therefore is above all. In comparison with Him, every other prophet or teacher has his origin out of the earth; and as is his origin, so is his nature, so is his utterance.

Ver. 32. **He that cometh out of heaven beareth witness of what he hath seen and heard; and no man receiveth his witness.** In ver. 12 we have seen that heaven is spoken of as the place of immediate divine knowledge and light. Jesus alone belongs to this sphere: all the prophets before His coming, though divinely commissioned, had 'the earth' as the starting-point of their utterances, spoke of what they had received on earth, spoke truly but not perfectly. The Divine light was reflected from the prophets to the world around. In Jesus the heavenly light itself came into the world. Jesus alone, then, beareth witness to that which He hath seen and which He heard, and (here again is the mournful cadence of this Gospel) no one receiveth His witness. So few receive, that they seem as nothing in comparison with those who reject. That the rejection is not in strictness universal the next verse declares.

Ver. 33. **He that received his witness set his seal to this, that God is true.** Every man who accepts His witness and thus declares that Jesus is true, in that very act attests, sets his seal to, the declaration that God is true. (For the opposite, see 1 John v. 10. A mere prophet might be unfaithful or might err. Jesus 'comes out of heaven,' declarer 'what He has seen,' and 'what He heard' from God: to disbelieve Him is to disbelieve God, to declare Him true is to declare God true. This is further explained and confirmed by the next verse.

Ver. 34. **For he whom God sent speaketh the words of God.** The last verse rests on the thought that the words of Jesus are the words of God. Here it is shown that this is involved in the very proposition that Jesus is the Sent of God. Strictly, there have been many whom God has sent,—for example, John the Baptist (chap. i. 6): his words were true, and were words of God. But where one is thus isolated as sent by God (and this is repeatedly done in this Gospel), he is *the Sent* in a peculiar and pre-eminent sense. He speaketh not 'words of God' only, but 'the words of God,' giving *all* the revelation that God gives. The enabling power thus to speak is the gift of the Spirit. Every one whom God sends is enabled to speak God's words—words that, for the portion of

the revelation he is commissioned to give, are truly God's words.—**For not by measure giveth he the Spirit.** He gives the Spirit not partially, but completely, for the purpose of enabling him who is sent to speak words of God. Rising from the partial and incomplete to that which is full and perfect, we find but One who has thus been sent by God, and but One who receives the Spirit in unmeasured fulness, enabling not for the complete declaration of a part only, but for the perfect revelation of the whole of the words of God.

Ver. 35. **The Father loveth the Son.** There is a continual heightening of the thought and expression. We read of Him 'that cometh from above,' Him 'that cometh out of heaven,' Him 'whom God sent,'—'the Son,' whom 'the Father loveth.' In ver. 17 we read that the Father sent the Son to save the world, because He 'so loved the world' (ver. 16): here we read of the love of the Father towards the Son who thus gave Himself for the accomplishment of the purpose of the Father. From chap. x. 17 it seems probable that it is of this love that we must understand the verse—of a love, therefore, referring to the work of redemption, not to the essential relation of the Son to the Father (comp. note on v. 20).—**And hath given all things into his hand.** From perfect love follows perfect communication not of 'the words of God' only (ver. 34), but of *all things* possessed. The Father has given all things into the Son's hand. Whatsoever the Son speaks or gives or does, is spoken, given, done, by the Father.

Ver. 36. **He that believeth in the Son hath eternal life.** As all things are in the Son's hand by the gift of the Father, the destiny of all men depends on their relation to the Son. He that believeth in the Son has in Him the highest of all blessings, life eternal; has this in present possession—involved in the communion of faith in which he lives.—**But he that obeyeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.** Over against the believer is here set, not the man who does not believe, but he that disobeys. The change from believing to obedience results from the thought of the last verse: supreme power is given to the Son; therefore he that receives Him not by faith is guilty of disobeying His authority; not faith only, but the obedience of faith, is His due. From the eyes of all such life is hidden whilst the unbelief and disobedience shall last. The rejection of the Son brings with it the wrath of God, by whom all things were given into the Son's hand: this is the present and the abiding heritage of him that obeyeth not the Son.

## CHAPTER IV. 1-42.

### *Jesus and the Samaritans.*

1 **W**HEN therefore <sup>a</sup> the Lord knew how <sup>1</sup> the Pharisees had <sup>a</sup> Chap. vi. 23.  
heard that Jesus made <sup>a</sup> and <sup>b</sup> baptized <sup>a</sup> more dis-  
2 ciples than John, (Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his <sup>18, 20, 25,</sup>  
<sup>xxi. 7, 12,</sup>  
<sup>b</sup> Chap. iii. 22,  
<sup>26</sup>

<sup>1</sup> perceived that

<sup>2</sup> had heard, Jesus maketh

<sup>3</sup> baptizeth

3 disciples,) He left Judea, and departed again into Galilee.  
 4 And he must needs go through Samaria.  
 5 Then cometh he <sup>4</sup> to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar,  
 near to the parcel of ground <sup>6</sup> that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.  
 6 Now Jacob's well was there.<sup>5</sup> Jesus therefore, being wearied  
 with *his* journey, sat thus on the well : <sup>6</sup> *and* <sup>7</sup> it was about the  
 7 sixth hour. There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water :  
 8 Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink. (For his disciples were  
 9 gone away unto the city to buy meat.<sup>8</sup>) Then saith the woman  
 of Samaria <sup>9</sup> unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest  
 drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria ? <sup>10</sup> for <sup>11</sup> the <sup>12</sup> Jews  
 10 have no dealings with the <sup>13</sup> Samaritans. Jesus answered and  
 said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is  
 that saith to thee, Give me to drink ; thou wouldest have asked  
 11 of him, and he would have given thee <sup>14</sup> living water. The  
 woman <sup>15</sup> saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and  
 the well is deep : from whence then hast thou that living water ?  
 12 <sup>16</sup> Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well,  
 and drank thereof himself, and his children,<sup>17</sup> and his cattle ?  
 13 Jesus answered and said unto her, <sup>18</sup> Whosoever <sup>19</sup> drinketh of  
 14 this water shall thirst again : But <sup>20</sup> whosoever drinketh <sup>21</sup> of the  
 water that I shall give him shall never thirst ; but the water  
 that I shall give him <sup>22</sup> shall be <sup>23</sup> in him a well <sup>24</sup> of water  
 15 springing up into <sup>25</sup> everlasting life.<sup>26</sup> <sup>27</sup> The woman saith unto  
 him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come  
 16 hither <sup>28</sup> to draw. Jesus <sup>29</sup> saith unto her, Go, call thy husband,  
 17 and come hither. The woman answered and said, I have no  
 husband. Jesus said <sup>30</sup> unto her, Thou hast well said, I have  
 18 no husband : For thou hast had five husbands ; and he whom  
 thou now hast is not thy husband : in <sup>31</sup> that saidst thou truly.<sup>32</sup>  
 19 The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art <sup>33</sup> a  
 20 prophet. <sup>34</sup> Our fathers worshipped in this mountain ; and ye  
 say, that in <sup>35</sup> Jerusalem is the place where men ought to wor-  
 21 ship.<sup>36</sup> Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me,<sup>37</sup> the <sup>38</sup> hour  
 cometh, <sup>39</sup> when ye shall <sup>40</sup> neither in this mountain, nor yet <sup>41</sup> at <sup>42</sup>  
 22 Jerusalem, worship <sup>43</sup> the Father. Ye worship <sup>44</sup> ye know not  
 what : <sup>45</sup> we know what we worship : <sup>46</sup> for <sup>47</sup> salvation <sup>48</sup> is of

<sup>c</sup> Comp. Gen. xxxiii. 19, xlviii. 22 ; Josh. xxiv. 32.

<sup>d</sup> 2 Kings xvii. 24 ; Ezra iv. 10, etc. ; Neh. iv. 1, 2. Comp. Luke ix. 53, xvii. 18 ; chap. viii. 48. <sup>e</sup> Jer. ii. 13, xvii. 13 ; Zech. xiv. 8 ; chap. vii. 38. Comp. Ezek. xlvii. ; Rev. vii. 17, xxi. 6, xxii. 1, 17. <sup>f</sup> Comp. chap. viii. 53. <sup>g</sup> Comp. chap. vi. 27, 49. <sup>h</sup> Chap. vi. 35, vii. 37 ; Rev. vii. 16, xxi. 6. Comp. chap. vi. 50. <sup>i</sup> Chap. vii. 38. <sup>j</sup> See chap. iii. 15. <sup>k</sup> Chap. vi. 34.

<sup>m</sup> Chap. ix. 17. See chap. i. 21 ; Matt. xxi. 11. <sup>n</sup> Comp. Gen. xii. 6, 7, xxxiii. 18, 20 ; Deut. xi. 29. <sup>o</sup> Deut. xii. 5, 11 ; 1 Kings ix. 3, xi. 13 ; 2 Chron. vi. 6, vii. 12 ; Ps. lxxvi. 2. <sup>p</sup> Mal. i. 11 ; 1 Tim. ii. 8. <sup>q</sup> See chap. viii. 27. <sup>r</sup> Comp. 2 Kings xvii. 29, etc. <sup>s</sup> Comp. Ps. clvii. 19, 20 ; Rom. iii. 2, iv. 4. <sup>t</sup> Isa. ii. 3 ; Mic. v. 2. Rom. ix. 5.

<sup>4</sup> He cometh therefore <sup>5</sup> Now there was a fountain there, Jacob's *fountain*  
<sup>6</sup> by the fountain <sup>7</sup> *omit* and <sup>8</sup> food  
<sup>9</sup> The Samaritan woman therefore saith <sup>10</sup> a Samaritan woman  
<sup>11</sup> *omit* the <sup>12</sup> She <sup>13</sup> sons <sup>14</sup> Every one that  
<sup>15</sup> hath drunk <sup>16</sup> become <sup>17</sup> fountain  
<sup>18</sup> of springing water, unto eternal life <sup>19</sup> all the way hither  
<sup>20</sup> He <sup>21</sup> saith <sup>22</sup> *omit* in <sup>23</sup> this thou hast said truly  
<sup>24</sup> must worship <sup>25</sup> Believe me, woman <sup>26</sup> an <sup>27</sup> *omit* ye shall  
<sup>28</sup> *omit* yet <sup>29</sup> in <sup>30</sup> shall ye worship  
<sup>31</sup> Ye worship that which ye know not <sup>32</sup> we worship that which we know  
<sup>33</sup> because the Salvation

- 23 the Jews. But the <sup>34</sup> hour cometh, and <sup>35</sup> now is, when the true <sup>36</sup> worshippers shall worship the Father in <sup>37</sup> spirit and in <sup>38</sup> truth :  
 24 for the Father <sup>39</sup> seeketh such to worship him. <sup>40</sup> God is a <sup>41</sup> Spirit : <sup>42</sup> and they that worship him must worship <sup>43</sup> him in  
 25 spirit and in <sup>44</sup> truth. The woman saith unto him, I know that  
 26 <sup>45</sup> he will tell us all things. Jesus saith unto her, <sup>46</sup> I that speak  
 27 unto thee am <sup>47</sup> he.  
 28 And upon this came his disciples, and <sup>48</sup> marvelled that he  
 29 talked with the <sup>49</sup> woman : yet no man said, What seekest thou ?  
 30 or, Why talkest thou with her ? The woman then <sup>50</sup> left her  
 31 waterpot, and went her way into the <sup>51</sup> city, and saith to the  
 32 men, Come, see a man, <sup>52</sup> which told me all things that ever I  
 33 did : is not this the Christ ? <sup>53</sup> Then <sup>54</sup> they went out of the city,  
 34 and came <sup>55</sup> unto him.  
 35 In the mean while his <sup>56</sup> disciples prayed him, saying, <sup>57</sup> Master, <sup>58</sup>  
 36 eat. But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know  
 37 not of. <sup>59</sup> Therefore said the disciples one to another, Hath any  
 38 man brought him <sup>60</sup> ought to eat ? Jesus saith unto them, <sup>61</sup> My  
 39 meat is to <sup>62</sup> do the will of him that sent me, and to <sup>63</sup> finish <sup>64</sup>  
 40 his work. Say not ye, There are yet four months, and <sup>65</sup> then  
 41 cometh harvest ? <sup>66</sup> behold, <sup>67</sup> I say unto you, Lift up your eyes,  
 42 and look on the fields ; <sup>68</sup> for they are white already to har-  
 43 vest. <sup>69</sup> And <sup>70</sup> he that reapeth receiveth wages, <sup>71</sup> and gathereth  
 44 fruit unto <sup>72</sup> life eternal : that both <sup>73</sup> he that soweth and he that  
 45 reapeth may <sup>74</sup> rejoice together. And <sup>75</sup> herein is that saying <sup>76</sup>  
 46 true, One soweth, and another reapeth. I sent you to reap  
 47 that whereon ye bestowed no labour : <sup>77</sup> other men laboured,  
 48 and ye are entered into their labours. <sup>78</sup>  
 49 And many of the Samaritans of that city <sup>79</sup> believed on <sup>80</sup>  
 50 him <sup>81</sup> for the saying <sup>82</sup> of the woman, which testified, <sup>83</sup> He told  
 51 me all <sup>84</sup> that ever I did. So when <sup>85</sup> the Samaritans were come  
 52 unto him, they besought him that he would tarry <sup>86</sup> with them :  
 53 and he abode there two days. And many more believed  
 54 because of his own <sup>87</sup> word ; And <sup>88</sup> said unto the woman, Now we

34 an

37 is seeking such, them that worship him

40 omit him

43 a 44 therefore

47 were on their way

51 that I should do

54 the harvest

57 that they are white for harvesting

60 omit both

64 others have toiled, and ye have entered into their toil

68 And from that city many of the Samaritans

70 because of the word

73 When therefore

45 Can this be the Christ ?

48 the

52 omit to

55 lo

58 Already

61 ye have not toiled

65 bearing witness

68 abide

35 omit in

38 omit a

41 Messiah cometh (which is called Christ)

49 Rabbi

53 accomplish

56 behold the fields

59 reward

62 ye have not toiled

65 bearing witness

68 abide

70 omit own

36 add also

39 spirit

42 and they

46 omit then

50 omit of

53 reward

56 behold the fields

59 reward

62 ye have not toiled

65 bearing witness

68 abide

70 omit own

73 And they

34 Chap. v. 25

37 Rom. viii.

38 Eph.

39 vi. 18.

40 Comp. Phil.

41 iii. 3.

42 Chap. i. 17.

43 Comp. chap.

44 vi. 44.

45 Chap. i. 41.

46 Ver. 29.

47 Comp. Deut.

48 xviii. 25, 28.

49 Matt. xxvi.

50 64 : Mark

51 xiv. 62 ;

52 chap. ix. 37.

53 Vers. 5, 8

54 Vers. 18, 25

55 Chap. i. 28.

56 Comp. Job

57 xxiii. 12.

58 Chap. v. 30,

59 vi. 38.

60 Chap. v. 36,

61 xvii. 4.

62 Matt. ix. 37 ;

63 Luke x. 2.

64 Ver. 14.

65 Comp. Ps.

66 cxxxvi. 5, 6 ;

67 Amos ix. 13





*From a photograph taken by F. FAITH.*

JACOB'S WELL.



believe, not because of thy saying:<sup>74</sup> for <sup>we</sup> we have heard *him*<sup>75</sup> ourselves,<sup>76</sup> and <sup>77</sup> know that this is indeed the Christ,<sup>78</sup> <sup>the</sup> Saviour of <sup>the</sup> world.

<sup>74</sup> No longer because of thy speaking do we believe  
<sup>76</sup> for ourselves

<sup>77</sup> and we

<sup>75</sup> omit him  
<sup>78</sup> omit the Christ

<sup>75</sup> Chap. xvii.  
8; 1 John  
iv. 14.  
<sup>76</sup> See chap. iii.  
17, xii. 47.  
<sup>78</sup> See chap. iii.  
16.

**CONTENTS.** The general object aimed at in the relation of the story of Nicodemus in chap. iii. is pursued in the account given us in this section of the interview of Jesus, first with the Samaritan woman, and then with the inhabitants of Sychar, who are brought by her to listen to His teaching. The subordinate parts are—(1) vers. 1-4, introductory, after the manner of the introduction to the story of Nicodemus in ii. 23-25; (2) vers. 5-26, interview with the Samaritan woman; (3) vers. 27-30, the mission of the woman to her fellow-townsmen; (4) vers. 31-38, the conversation of Jesus with His disciples, in regard to the nature and success of their work; (5) vers. 39-42, the work of Jesus among the inhabitants of Sychar.

Vers. 1-3. When therefore the Lord perceived that the Pharisees had heard, Jesus maketh and baptizeth more disciples than John, (though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,) he left Judea, and departed again into Galilee. The object of these verses is to explain the reason why Jesus now left Judea for Galilee. How long He had remained in Judea we are not informed (see the note on chap. iii. 22), being only told that in the country districts the success of His ministry had excited the notice of the Pharisees (of Jerusalem), and had led to comparisons between the two teachers who had so suddenly appeared in the land. It will be observed that the circumstances described in this verse are substantially the same as those brought before us in the words of the disciples of John after their disputation with the Jew (chap. iii. 26). They said to their master that to Jesus all were coming,—that is, by plain inference, more were flocking to Jesus than to the Baptist. It is only necessary to allow a short interval of time for the diffusion of the news, and we are brought to the state of things presented here. If, then, there is this close connection between chap. iii. 25, 26, and the opening of the present chapter, it seems impossible to believe that the imprisonment of the Baptist can have taken place in the interval, when in chap. iii. 24 the Evangelist expressly refers to the fact that John was as yet at liberty. The imprisonment is nowhere expressly mentioned by him; but while it is very easy to understand such an omission if the event fell in one of those intervals which separate so markedly the successive narratives of his Gospel, it would be strange if, in a closely connected paragraph, he should first record that the imprisonment had not yet taken place, and then, although the event took place at the very time, pass over it in silence. It seems, then, much more natural to interpret the words heard by the Pharisees as meaning that Jesus is making and baptizing more disciples than John is *making and baptizing*, than to suppose the contrast to be between the *present* action of the one and the *past* ministry of the other,—as if the words were, 'Jesus maketh more disciples than John *used to make*.' Hence we regard the ministry of John as still enduring at the period to which this verse relates. The journey into Galilee now

alluded to is not, therefore, that recorded in Matt. iv. 12, which was taken after the imprisonment of John. (See further the note on chap. vi. 1.) On the determination of this question rests the explanation of our Lord's departure from Judea. If John had now been delivered up to his foes, the Evangelist's meaning might be that Jesus withdrew from a persecution which those who had successfully opposed the Baptist would surely raise against One whose success was even greater. But such a meaning is beset with difficulties, for there would be something strange and unlike the style of this Gospel in so brief an allusion to the avoidance by our Lord of open hostility at this early period of His ministry; and it would not be easy to see why the Pharisees should be expressly mentioned and not 'the Jews.' If, however, we take the view defended above, that the Baptist was still pursuing his course, these difficulties disappear. Not to escape from persecution, but to put an end to comparisons which (however true in fact) were mischievously used, Jesus retired from the land in which John was teaching and baptizing. True, He must increase and John must decrease; but the hour for the close of John's preparatory labours had not yet come, and the purposes of Jesus Himself would be best furthered by the complete accomplishment of the Baptist's mission. Individuals might be removed from the circle of John's disciples and be received by Jesus (see chap. i. 37); but a general impression of this kind could not be made until a certain work of preparation had taken place. For His own sake, therefore, it was not desirable that this preparation-work should prematurely close. Again, we shall thus better understand the mention of the Pharisees. That class had rigidly and suspiciously inquired into John's right to assume the position of a prophet, and the report which they now heard might well rouse them to renewed action in their character of defenders of the faith and religious practice of their nation. Any such action on their part could hardly fail at this stage to be injurious, even if it were directed against John and not against Jesus Himself. But there was no reason to think that their opposition would be limited to the Baptist. Jesus, too, would have His work interrupted by their embittered feeling. Not, therefore, to avoid His enemies, but to transfer His labours to freer and more open fields, did our Lord withdraw from Judea at this time. The remarkable indirectness of the language of this verse is explained by the writer's wish to seize the very moment at which the withdrawal from Judea became necessary. The sojourn of Jesus in the neighbourhood of John's sphere of action brought out John's distinct confession of the relation in which he stood to his Lord. That was for the present enough; and the sojourn terminated at the very moment when it threatened to be the means of injuring the Baptist's work, and of precipitating the open conflict between Jesus and the Jews.—It seems most natural to take the word 'knew' or 'perceived' as referring, not to infor-



mation obtained, but to supernatural knowledge (compare chap. ii. 24, 25). Most seemly, therefore, is the designation of Jesus here as 'the Lord'—a rare usage with John, who commonly employs the personal name Jesus. Because He was the Lord, not man only, He discerned the first stirrings of hostility in the minds of the Pharisees and the occasion which gave them birth. Afterwards the name Jesus occurs, because the Evangelist quotes the very words of the report,—a report indeed containing an incorrect statement, set right in the parenthesis which follows. But there was nothing unnatural in the error. Jesus might easily be represented as baptizing (compare chap. iii. 22), because His disciples could only have acted in His name and by His authority. The Pharisees could not know why He should abstain from performing the act Himself: we know that His baptism was not with water but with the Holy Ghost, and 'the Holy Ghost was not yet given' (chap. vii. 39). Such, then, were the circumstances amidst which Jesus 'left' Judea and retired into Galilee. The word used for 'left' is interesting, and confirms our interpretation. It means literally 'let go,' 'let alone;' and it is hardly possible not to feel that by his use of it the Evangelist would direct our attention to the fact that Israel's rejection of God's mercy was, in the wisdom of the Divine arrangements, the cause why it was itself rejected, and the other nations of the world called.—It should be added that we have assumed throughout that Ænon and Salim were situated in Judea, so that both Jesus and the Baptist were at this time in the same region of the country. If Salim was near Scythopolis, in Samaria (which seems very unlikely), the argument is not seriously affected. In any case, it is clear that for the time Jesus wished to remove His sphere of labour from the immediate view of the Pharisees by a retirement into Galilee.

**Ver. 4. And he must needs go through Samaria.** The natural route from Judea to Galilee lay through Samaria. The other route, through the country on the east of Jordan, was so much longer that no one would choose it unless desirous of avoiding Samaria. The necessity here spoken of, therefore, may simply have reference to geographical position, and to the present urgent motive for reaching Galilee without delay. Still the use of 'must' in this Gospel compels us to lay an emphasis on the word, and to interpret it as denoting more than merely usage or convenience. If the Evangelist's thought is that the hostility of the Pharisees (partly actually existing, partly foreseen) made it necessary for the Saviour to hasten into Galilee, then he would have us understand that the Jews themselves brought about this visit to the hated nation of the Samaritans. But above and beyond all this, there seems a clear intimation of the truth brought before us in ver. 34, chap. ix. 4, etc.: here, as always, Jesus acts according to His knowledge of His Father's will.

**Ver. 5. He cometh therefore to a city of Samaria which is called Sychar.** 'From the hills through which the main route of Palestine must always have run the traveller descends into a wide plain, the widest and the most beautiful of the plains of the Ephraimite mountains, one mass of corn unbroken by boundary or hedge, from the midst of which start up olive trees, themselves unenclosed as the fields in which they stand. Over the hills which close the northern end of this

plain, far away in the distance, is caught the first glimpse of the snowy ridge of Hermon. Its western side is bounded by the abutments of two mountain ranges, running from west to east. These ranges are Gerizim and Ebal; and up the opening between them, not seen from the plain, lies the modern town of Nâblus . . . the most beautiful, perhaps it might be said the only very beautiful spot in central Palestine.'<sup>1</sup> Nâblus is a corruption of Neapolis, the name given by the Romans to the 'new city' built nearly on the site of the ancient Shechem. The city which gave its name to this district of the Holy Land, Samaria, distant about six miles, had recently been rebuilt in a style of great magnificence by Herod the Great, who gave it the name of Sebaste. But, partly through the prestige of its antiquity and famous history, and partly through the power of religious associations, Shechem was pre-eminently the city of Samaria. It lay, as has been said, at the foot of Mount Gerizim, on the summit of which was the temple of the Samaritans, the stronghold of their worship for nearly three hundred years. It is impossible here to do more than trace the main outlines of the history of the Samaritan people. Their origin has in modern times been a subject of warm controversy. The narrative of 2 Kings xxv. 12 certainly seems to imply that *all* the inhabitants of the country were carried away to 'Halah and Habor and the cities of the Medes' (2 Kings xvii. 6): Josephus also speaks of the transplanting of all the people. But, apart from the improbability that such a wholesale deportation would be made, we find both in Scripture (2 Chron. xxxiv. 9, and perhaps xxx. 1, 5, 10) and also in Josephus intimations that some few at least of the inhabitants remained, after the land had been colonised by settlers from Cuthah and other cities of Assyria. In the manner related in 2 Kings xvii. these colonists were led to mingle a worship of Jehovah as the tutelary Deity of their new country with the idolatry brought with them from their native cities. What we read of their history at a later date is in exact accord with the mixed character of their race and their worship. They referred their own origin only to Assyria (Ezra iv. 2), yet they were desirous of fraternising with the Jews in their work of rebuilding the temple of Jerusalem; and, when finally repulsed by the Jews and defeated in their attempts to injure and frustrate their work, they built (B.C. 409) a rival temple on Mount Gerizim after the model of that in Jerusalem, taking as their first high priest one whom Nehemiah had expelled (Neh. xiii. 28). From this time they seem to have maintained a system of worship modelled on that of the Jews, their older idolatry being, as far as we can judge, entirely renounced. Of the Scriptures the Samaritans received one portion only, the Pentateuch; but for this they professed peculiar reverence. A comparison of the Samaritan Pentateuch with that of the Hebrew Bible shows that many alterations had been introduced into the text by the Samaritans, but at the same time that these had only been made for the purpose of authenticating their own mode of worship and of maintaining the honour of their sacred places. This partial agreement, however, between the religious beliefs of the two peoples, so far from preventing, had really led to the most determined hostility between them. To the Jew, a man of purely Gentile descent and a man of mixed race

<sup>1</sup> Stanley, *Sinai and Palestine*, pp. 233, 234.

were equally Gentiles; and an approximation to Jewish belief and modes of worship gave no claim of brotherhood with Jews. Hebrew literature is full of strangely varying statements in regard to the Cuthim (as they are called),—statements which probably reflect the relations subsisting between the nations at different periods (see *Smith's Dictionary of the Bible*, iii. 1117, 1118). In the time of our Lord the temple on Mount Gerizim had long been in ruins, but both the mount and the city at its foot had retained their sacred character; and it was here that the true Samaritan practices and traditions had their strongest hold on the people. The slight sketch which we have been able to give of the history of this people will be sufficient to show how singular was their situation. The ancient writings of the Jews themselves deal with Samaritans now as with heathen, now as with men belonging to the stock of Israel; and the narrative of this chapter places them in the same position—a position not wholly Gentile, but intermediate between the Jewish and the Gentile world.—It has been commonly assumed that the 'city called Sychar' is identical with Shechem, and the chief subject of controversy has been the motive for the change of name. Whilst some have regarded the alteration as a mere error of pronunciation, must have ascribed it to Jewish prejudice, interpreting Sychar as 'drunkard' or 'falsehood'; others, again, have considered the word identical with a well Sokhar mentioned in the Talmud. It seems more probable, however, that Sychar is a village still known by a name substantially the same (El-Asker), situated about two miles to the east of the present town of Nâblus. This village is nearer than Shechem can have been to the well which bore the name of Jacob; and it is much more likely that the Evangelist would pause to describe the position of such a place than that of the ancient city of Shechem.—**Near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.** There can be no doubt that, in speaking of Jacob's gift to his son Joseph, John refers to Gen. xlviii. 22, 'I have given thee one portion above thy brethren,'—whatever meaning may be attached to the last words of that verse. The Hebrew word here rendered 'portion' is identical with the name Shechem. At Shechem, therefore, were the bones of Joseph buried (Josh. xxiv. 32), and the city and surrounding country 'became the inheritance of the children of Joseph.'

**Ver. 6. Now there was a fountain there, Jacob's fountain.** The distinction between the natural spring and the artificial well is usually maintained with great care in the language of Scripture. Now and then, however (as is very natural), a well, fed as it is by springs, is itself called a spring or fountain. Thus 'the angel of the Lord found' Hagar 'by a fountain of water in the wilderness' (Gen. xvi. 7), and 'the well was called Beer-lahai-roi' (ver. 14); and in the narrative of Gen. xxiv., where in the Authorised Version we find 'well' three times (in vers. 11, 13, 16), the original has first *well*, then *spring* or *fountain* twice. The country round Shechem was a place of 'fountains and depths that spring out in valley and hill' (Deut. viii. 7); but it is not of such natural springs that we must here think. What in this verse is called a fountain is a 'well' in vers. 11 and 12. Yet it may be worth noticing that the latter name is used by the woman of Samaria: to the Evangelist the well is a 'fountain,' and his

name implies far deeper and richer thoughts than hers. An almost continuous tradition fixes beyond doubt the position of this well, which lies very near the road by which our Lord would be travelling from Judea to Galilee; and amongst the inhabitants of the adjoining towns it is still known as the well of Jacob or the fountain of Jacob. When visited by Maundrell two hundred years ago the well was more than 100 feet deep, but the accumulation of rubbish has diminished the depth to 75 feet: the bore is 9 or 10 feet wide. That Jacob (if indeed this patriarch's name was rightly given to the well, and there is no reason for questioning the tradition) should have sunk this well, excavated out of the solid rock, in the immediate neighbourhood of abundant springs, is a striking proof of the insecurity of his position in the 'land of promise,' and of his precarious relations with the people of the country.—**Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus by the fountain.** Shechem was one of the main halting-places on the route from Jerusalem to Galilee. Turning off a little from the road, Jesus reached the well, and (now alone, because His disciples had gone into Sychar to buy provisions) wearied with a long day's travel He 'sat thus'—sat, wearied as He was—'by the fountain,' or on the low wall built round the well.—**It was about the sixth hour.** As in the other passages in which John mentions the 'hour,' there has been great difference of opinion respecting the time intended. If the ordinary reckoning be adopted, as in the other Gospels, the sixth hour would fall in the morning, a little before noon. But for the reasons assigned in the note on chap. i. 39, it seems much more probable that a different computation is followed here, in which, as among ourselves, the hour is of *fixed* length (not a twelfth part of the variable interval between sunrise and sunset), and the time is reckoned from midnight and noon. By 'sixth hour,' therefore, according to the usage of the ancients, we must understand either the hour between 5 and 6 A.M. or the hour between 5 and 6 P.M. On the whole, the latter seems more probable. If our Lord's journey through Samaria took place in the middle of December (see the note on ver. 35), 5 P.M. would be about the time of sunset, and the evening twilight would last until about half-past 6. This hour was the ordinary time at which women came forth to draw water at the public wells. No difficulty need be felt on account of the lateness of the hour, for very little time is really required for all that is here related up to the 38th verse (comp. Mark i. 32; Luke iv. 40).

**Ver. 7. There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water.** By Samaria here we are of course to understand the country not the city of Samaria. The woman belonged to Sychar; by race and religion she was a Samaritan, and it is to this fact, as is shown by the preposition employed in the original, that the Evangelist would direct our special attention. It was very natural that she should come at this time to draw water at the well; but from the narrative that follows it seems probable that something more than the excellence of the water drew her to it day by day. One so strongly imbued with the ancient traditions of her countrymen could not but turn with deepest interest to 'Jacob's well.'

**Vers. 7, 8. Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink.** (For his disciples were gone away unto

the city to buy food.) The departure of the disciples had left Jesus thus dependent on the woman's kindness; for they had left no vessel by which the water could be drawn from the deep well. It has been conjectured that the recorder of this narrative had not gone on to Sychar with his fellow-disciples, but himself heard the Saviour's conversation with the Samaritan woman. The conjecture is most improbable, if not altogether contrary to the statement of the Evangelist. We cannot doubt that it was from our Lord's own lips that the beloved disciple received the whole account.

Ver. 9. *The Samaritan woman therefore saith unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew, askest drink of me, which am a Samaritan woman? for Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.* It is evident that Jesus was at once recognised as a Jew, probably through some difference of accent, or language, or dress. We can hardly suppose that the woman was really surprised at

the request preferred, so natural from the lips of a weary traveller (comp. Gen. xxiv. 17). We may rather imagine her as hastening to procure what was asked for, whilst not failing to point out how inconsistent with Jewish principles it was to ask even for such a favour as this. As has been said above, the maxims of the Jews respecting intercourse with the Samaritan people varied much at different times, and it is not easy to say what rules prevailed at the period with which we are here concerned. One precept of the Talmud (quoted in the *Dict. of the Bible*, iii. 1117) approves their mode of preparing the flesh of animals; others commend their unleavened bread, their cheese, and finally all their food. Elsewhere, however, we find restrictions; and the wine, vinegar, etc., of the Samaritans are forbidden to every Israelite, their country only with its roads and its other products being regarded as clean. This narrative shows that it was held lawful to buy food in a Samaritan town, so that the words of this



Women at a Well.

verse must probably be understood to mean that Jews avoided all *familiar* intercourse with the alien people, sought and expected no favours at their hands. It is usually assumed that the last sentence is inserted by the Evangelist in the interest of Gentile readers. It may be so, as such short parenthetical explanations are certainly to be found elsewhere in this Gospel. There seems, however, no sufficient reason for removing the clause from the woman's answer. The repetition of the well-known maxim gives a piquant emphasis to her words, bringing out with sharp distinctness the contrast between the principles of the countrymen of Jesus and the request which necessity had extorted. The use of the present tense ('have no dealings') adds some support to this view; and one can hardly avoid the conviction that, had John himself given such an explanation, he would have so expressed himself as to avoid all appearance of discordance with his statement in ver. 8.

Ver. 10. *Jesus answered and said unto her, If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water.* We may well believe that there was something in the manner of Jesus, when uttering His first words, that invited conversation, and was intended to lead the woman to inquiry. This point gained, His next words could but cause surprise and excite remark. Her answer had told of her recognition of Him as a Jew: His reply declares her ignorance of Him and of what He was able to give. The 'gift of God' is probably not different from the 'living water' afterwards mentioned. John himself gives an explanation of the latter in hap. vii. 39, and his interpretation must be applied here also. 'Living water,' then, denotes the gift of the Holy Spirit. This was pre-eminently the promised gift of the Father (see especially Isa. xlv. ; Joel ii.), beautifully and most aptly symbolized by the fresh

springing water, which wherever it comes makes the desert rejoice, and everything live (Ezek. xlvii. 9). This was also the especial gift of the Son (see chap. i. 33), in whom the promises of the Father are fulfilled (2 Cor. i. 20). Had the woman known God's gift, known also that the Dispenser of this gift stood before her, she would have been the petitioner, and He, with no delay and without upbraiding, would have given her living water.

Ver. 11. *She saith unto him, Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water?* In the answer of Jesus there was much to cause surprise, especially in the emphatic reference to Himself; but there was nothing in the actual terms used that compelled the hearer to seek for a figurative meaning. 'Living water' was a phrase in ordinary use in speaking of the fresh bubbling spring or the flowing brook. 'Isaac's servants digged in the valley and found there a spring of living water' (Gen. xxvi. 19, margin). Wherever running water is spoken of in the ceremonial law, the same expression is used. Hence nothing more than the fresh spring that supplied the well might at first be presented to the woman's mind, and that this precious gift came of the Divine bounty would be no unfamiliar thought. Though, as a Samaritan, she might know little or nothing of God's promise of His Spirit under this very emblem, or of Jeremiah's comparison of God Himself to a fountain of living waters (Jer. ii. 13), yet reflection would suggest some such meaning. At present, however, she answers without reflection, and perceives no higher promise than that of the Creator's bounty, attained without the use of ordinary means.

Ver. 12. *Art thou greater than our father Jacob, which gave us the well, and drank thereof himself, and his sons, and his cattle?* It was from Joseph that the Samaritans were wont to claim descent; all the district around belonged to his children. But Jacob here receives special mention as the giver of the well. The well was his; he drank of it himself. Again the thought is forced upon us, that the Samaritan woman had sought this well partly on account of its connection with the fathers of her people. The feeling may have been tinged with superstition, but it was honourable in itself. The first part of her answer (ver. 11) showed how limited the range of the woman's thoughts still was: in the words of this verse we see her dawning conviction of the Stranger's greatness, and the impression made upon her by His manner and His words.

Ver. 13. *Jesus answered and said unto her, Every one that drinketh of this water shall thirst again.* The question receives no direct reply: the greatness of the Giver must be learnt from the quality of the gift. Even the living water from Jacob's well has no power to prevent the return of thirst.

Ver. 14. *But whosoever hath drunk of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall become in him a fountain of springing water, unto eternal life.* The living water of which Jesus speaks becomes in him who hath drunk of it a perennial fountain,—a fountain of water that is ever springing up in freshness and life, of water that not only is itself living, but that brings and gives eternal life. As before, this 'water' is the

Holy Spirit. The whole thought closely approaches that of chap. vii. 38. There the promise is, that out of the heart of him who comes unto Jesus that he may drink, who believes in Jesus, there shall flow rivers of living water; 'And this spake He of the Spirit.' The Holy Spirit is the special gift of Jesus; and, reciprocally, it is through the Holy Spirit that the believer remains united to his Lord in an abiding fellowship (chap. xvi. 14, 15), and that Jesus lives in him (chap. xvii. 23). These truths of the later discourses are really present here: Jesus, who first gives the living water, becomes in him that hath received it the fountain which supplies the same stream of life for ever. The end is life eternal, not attained in the remote future, but begun and actually present in every one who has received the water that Jesus gives; for all those to whom the Spirit is given experience that union with God which is eternal life (see the note on chap. iii. 14).

Ver. 15. *The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come all the way hither to draw.* These are words of simple earnestness. In the mysterious words of the Jewish traveller one thing was plain,—instead of the water she came to draw, water was offered that would satisfy thirst now and for ever. Could she gain this gift, she would no longer need to traverse the distance from Sychar to Jacob's well. Though much nearer than Shechem, El-Askar is perhaps three-quarters of a mile from the well. The later narrative makes it impossible for us to regard this answer as one either of flippancy or of dulness of spiritual perception. It is in every way more probable and true to nature to consider it as the expression of a bewildered mind eager to receive such a gift as has been offered, little as she could comprehend of what nature the gift could be. If we are right in the conjecture that other than common motives brought her to the well (see the note on ver. 12), it is still easier to understand her reply. With this verse comp. chap. vi. 34.

Ver. 16. *He saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither.* The promise Jesus has given is one of satisfaction,—a promise, therefore, which cannot be understood or fulfilled till the want has been clearly apprehended and felt. These sudden words are designed to produce this effect. He who ever 'discerned what was in the man' with whom He spoke, well knew what answer His words would call forth. Her past life and her present state proclaimed guilt and disappointment, carnality and wretchedness; all this she must recognise and feel before His gift can be hers.

Ver. 17. *The woman answered and said, I have no husband.* The effect is produced. The woman's words are a genuine confession,—an acknowledgment, perhaps of wretchedness, certainly of guilt.—*Jesus saith unto her, Thou hast well said, I have no husband.* He accepts the truthfulness of her statement, but shows her how fully her life is known to Him. In this answer the emphasis lies on 'husband'; the woman's words are repeated with their order changed. 'I have no husband:' 'Well saidst thou, Husband I have not.'

Ver. 18. *For thou hast had five husbands.* The 'five' were no doubt lawful husbands, from whom she had been separated either by death or by divorce.—*And he whom thou now hast is not*

thy husband: this thou hast said truly. In contrast with the lawful marriages is set the present unlawful union with one who was no husband. Her life was sinful: in what degree we cannot learn from this brief statement. An age in which divorce was freely allowed cannot be judged by the same rules as one of stricter principles. Whatever may have led her to an evil life, it is plain that her heart was not yet hardened.

Ver. 19. The woman saith unto him, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet. Nothing can be more misleading than the idea that she is seeking to turn the conversation from an unwelcome subject, or to lead it to other topics than herself. Her answer is rather a fresh illustration of her inquiring and earnest character, notwithstanding all the sinfulness of her life. When her delighted wonder has found expression in her immediate acknowledgment, 'Sir, I behold that thou art a prophet,' she eagerly lays before Him a question which to her was of all questions the most important.

Ver. 20. Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men must worship. 'This mountain' is of course Gerizim, near the foot of which they were standing. With this mountain was connected, as she believed, all the religious history of her nation; for in the very Scriptures which the Samaritans possessed (the Pentateuch) the name of Gerizim had been inserted in the place of the holy city of the Jews. She could point to the sacred spot on which their temple had stood, then and in all succeeding ages up to our own time pre-eminently 'holy ground.' Her question was not prompted by mere curiosity or an interest in the settlement of an ancient controversy. It was a question of life and death to her. The claim of the Jews was exclusive. Not only 'ought' men to worship in Jerusalem, but that was the place where men *must* worship,—the only true holy place. One cannot but think that their confident and consistent maintenance of this first principle had long disturbed her mind; and when she saw in the Stranger one who could declare God's will, she eagerly sought for the resolution of her doubt. As long as she knew not with certainty where was God's true altar, she had no means of satisfying her religious wants. That her national pride had not stifled every hesitation on such a point as this plainly attests her earnestness: it is no ordinary candour that can look on the supremacy of Gerizim or Jerusalem as an open question. Her words imply a willingness to accept the revelation of the truth, whatever it may be, if only she can learn where with acceptance she may appear before God.

Ver. 21. Jesus saith unto her, Believe me, woman, an hour cometh, when neither in this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, shall ye worship the Father. The woman can hardly have doubted that the decision of a Jewish prophet would be in favour of Jerusalem, but the answer of Jesus sets aside all ideas of sanctity of place. With neither of these two most hallowed spots shall the thought of true worship be bound up. In saying 'an hour cometh,' Jesus shows that He is not repeating a truth belonging to the revelation of the past, but is proclaiming a new order of things. Yet the chief characteristic of the new order is, after all, not the equality of places where men worship, but the clear knowledge of the Being to whom worship

is paid: from this the former flows. Samaritans shall offer worship in spite of Jewish exclusiveness, for they shall worship *the Father*. 'Israel is my son, even my first-born,' were God's words to Pharaoh; but now He offers the name to all, and the words of Jesus imply the abolition of every distinction, not of place only but of nation, in the presence of God, and for the purpose of true worship.

Ver. 22. Ye worship that which ye know not: we worship that which we know. The two questions at issue between Jews and Samaritans were those of holy place and holy Scripture. The former, though of far inferior importance (as the Jews 'themselves were by their 'dispersion' being gradually trained to know), was the more easily seized upon by national prejudice and zeal. Of this question Jesus has spoken. He passes on immediately to the other, which the woman had not raised, but which was of vital moment. The Samaritans did really worship God,—there is no slur cast on the intention and aim of their worship; their error consisted in clinging to an imperfect revelation of Him, receiving Moses but rejecting the prophets. Hating and avoiding Jews, they cut themselves off from the training given by God to that people through whom His final purposes were to be made known to the world. It was the essential characteristic of the whole of Jewish history and prophecy that it gradually led up to the Messiah; that the successive prophets made known with increasing clearness the nature of His kingdom; and that every one who could understand their word saw that the Divine purpose to save the world was to be accomplished through One arising out of Israel. He who knew not God as *thus* revealing and giving salvation did not really know Him. Every Jew who truly received and understood the oracles of God committed to his trust (Rom. iii. 2) might be said to 'know' the object of his worship; and it is because our Lord is speaking of such knowledge,—knowledge respecting God given by the Scriptures which the Jews possessed,—that He says 'that which we know,' not 'Him whom we know.' The Samaritans then worshipped that which they knew not,—in this more enlightened than the Athenians who built an altar to an unknown God, but inferior even to those of Israel who had 'a zeal of God but not according to knowledge,' and standing far below those meant by our Lord when He says '*we* worship,'—we, namely, who have really appropriated Israel's inheritance of truth and hope.—**Because the Salvation is of the Jews.** 'The Salvation' is that foretold in Scripture, and long waited for. The words are those of Jesus; but, remembered and quoted as they are by the Evangelist, they show how unfounded is the charge sometimes laid against this Gospel, that it is marked by enmity to the Jewish people. It is only when 'the Jews' have apostatized and rejected Jesus that the term becomes one of condemnation, designating the enemies of all goodness and truth.

Ver. 23. But an hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and truth. This verse links itself with both the preceding verses 21 and 22. To no place of special sanctity shall worship belong: though 'the salvation is of the Jews,' this involves no limitation of it to the Jewish nation: on the contrary, an hour cometh when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and

truth. 'An hour cometh' had been said before by Jesus (ver. 21), but He could not then add 'and now is;' for, till the truth set forth in ver. 22 had been received, Samaritans could not truly worship 'the Father.' Now, however, they and all may do so. But the added words 'and now is' imply still more than this. Following the declaration that the Messianic salvation comes from among the Jews, they are no obscure intimation that, in Himself, the hour so long waited for has arrived, and thus they at least prepare for the direct announcement to be made in ver. 26. The word 'true' here is that which has been already spoken of (see note on chap. i. 9, the only place before this in which it has as yet occurred) as so common and so important in this Gospel. The worshippers denoted by it are not merely sincere, free from all falsehood and dishonesty; they offer a worship that deserves the name, that fully answers to the lofty, noble, pure idea that the word 'worship' brings before the mind. In the day now dawning on the world such worshippers as these will worship the Father *in spirit and truth*. It is difficult to exhaust the meaning of these words, but we must start from the two thoughts of the verses which immediately precede: the first and chief points in the interpretation are,—not in sacred place but in spirit (ver. 21), not in imperfection of knowledge but in truth (ver. 22). The very name by which Jesus indicates the object of all worship, 'the Father' (a name no longer used of a chosen nation, but offering to *each man* a *personal* relation to God), had prepared the way for the abolition of all limitations of place: the teaching is completed here, when man's spirit is declared to be the 'hallowed ground' where he may approach his Father and his God. Again, in the past all knowledge of God had been imperfect,—not merely as our knowledge of the Infinite must be limited, but also in comparison with what may be known by man. Even Jews who held the oracles of truth saw in them as 'in a glass darkly;' Samaritans who rejected the words of the prophets were far more ignorant. The law had been but a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of the things (Heb. x. 1); type and figure concealed whilst they revealed the future blessing. But 'the hour now is' when the truth of God is revealed,—'truth' as well as 'grace' has come (chap. i. 17); and (in the full knowledge of it) worship may now be offered to the Father. Read in connection with other parts of our Lord's teaching, the words 'spirit and truth' express much that could not be apparent at the moment when they were spoken. The Son appearing as the revealer of the Father, Himself the Truth, Himself giving to men the Holy Spirit who alone can hallow man's spirit as the sanctuary of worship,—all these are thoughts which cannot but press on us as we read this verse.—For the Father also is seeking such, them that worship him. The hour of this real worship is already come, for the Father also is seeking such real worshippers. They are offering Him real homage, for He on His part is seeking them: His seeking—through His Son, come to save (ver. 23), and to seek that He may save (Luke xix. 10)—explains and renders possible this worship. There is much difficulty in determining the true meaning of the original in this clause. It is usually explained to mean *either*, 'The Father seeketh that His worshippers be such' (i.e., that they should worship in spirit and

truth), *or*, 'For such the Father seeketh to be His worshippers.' Both interpretations involve serious difficulties, partly of language, partly of meaning. On the whole, the translation given above seems most probable, but its force is not at once apparent. There is a curious variation in the Greek words, which is often considered accidental, or at all events too minute to be significant, but which we must regard as intentional and important. In ver. 21 and in the first part of 23 the word 'worship' has its usual construction, but in this clause the case which follows the verb is suddenly changed, and a very unusual construction is introduced. We may represent the force of the word as it is commonly used by 'offer worship to;' but as used in the clause before us and in ver. 24, the connection of the verb with its object becomes more direct and close. An English reader can feel the force of a sudden transition from 'offering worship to the Father' to 'worshipping the Father.' The former may or may not be real and successful, and may be used of a lower as well as of the highest homage; the latter implies actual attainment of the end desired,—reaching Him in worship, if we may so speak; and thus it may almost be said to contain in itself the qualifying words of the preceding clause, for the 'real' offering of worship to God is equivalent to worshipping Him. If this view is correct, and we are persuaded that such a writer as John could not so vary the language without design, the meaning of the clause is: For also the Father is now seeking such men,—those, namely, who actually worship Him. There is thus a mutual seeking and meeting on the part of the Father and His children.

Ver. 24. **God is spirit: and they that worship him must worship in spirit and truth.** Such worship as is described in the last verse is the only real worship that can be conceived. This verse does not say what men must do, in the sense of what men *ought to do*. It is the nature of worship in itself that is described. No other worship than that which is offered in spirit and truth can possibly be actual worship of God (the same idea is here expressed as in the last clause of ver. 23), because 'God is spirit.' We must not render these words 'God is a spirit,' for it is not personality that is spoken of, but abstract being, the nature of the Divine essence. Since the spiritual presence of God is everywhere, Gerizim and Jerusalem lose all claim to be the special places for His worship. Not the outward action of the worshipper, not the forms he uses or the gifts he brings, but his spirit alone can be brought to meet the spiritual presence of God. Where this is done, God Himself meets the spirit which He has sought and prepared, and to which He has made known the truth lying at the foundation of all worship, the truth which reveals Himself. In this wonderful passage are concentrated many of the most essential truths of New Testament teaching. The historical development of God's plan, the preparation for Christianity made by Judaism, the idea of progress from the outward to the inward, from the sensuous to the spiritual (comp. 1 Cor. xv. 46), the independence of forms which marks the essence of religion, and yet its freedom to clothe itself in form so long as the spirit is not lost,—these are the lessons taught here; and however special the form in which they are presented, they are in perfect accord with the whole course of New Testament doctrine.—The main principles of



these verses would be understood by the woman to whom our Lord was speaking. But a day in which such principles should be realised must surely be that for which Samaria as well as Judea was waiting,—the 'latter days' of Messiah's advent?

Ver. 25. *The woman saith unto him, I know that Messiah cometh (which is called Christ).* There is nothing surprising in her avowal that a Deliverer was looked for. We know from other sources that this was, and still is, an article of the Samaritan as of the Jewish faith; from age to age this people had waited in expectation of 'the Converter' or 'the Guide.' But the use of the Jewish name 'Messiah' is more remarkable. We might suppose that it pointed to an approach towards Jewish faith and thought effected in this woman's heart by the teaching of Jesus, were it not that ver. 29 seems to show that the name was understood by Samaritans in general. Yet it could hardly be otherwise. Separated as the nations were, the famous name which the Jews universally applied to the Deliverer, for whose coming both peoples alike were waiting, would naturally be known far beyond the limits of Judea. The explanatory parenthesis, 'which is called Christ,' was no doubt added by the Evangelist, who afterwards (ver. 29) translates the word without any mention of the Hebrew form.—*When he is come, he will tell us all things.* There can be little doubt that the Samaritan hope was mainly founded on the great passage in the Pentateuch, Deut. xviii. 15-18 (see note on chap. i. 21). The language here used, 'He will tell us all things,' at once reminds us of Deut. xviii. 18, 'He shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.' The dependence of the Samaritans on the Pentateuch alone would naturally lead to their giving prominence to the prophetic aspect of the Coming One, so emphatically presented in this passage of the Law, rather than to the aspects under which the Deliverer is viewed in the later books of the Old Testament. The woman's words, indeed, may not convey her whole conception of Messiah, for the context has pointed only to revelation and teaching; but it is more than probable that many elements of the Jewish faith on this subject would be unknown in Samaria. If, however, the Samaritans expected less than the fuller revelation warranted, they at least escaped the prevalent Jewish error of looking for a Conqueror rather than a Prophet, for a temporal rather than a spiritual King.

Ver. 26. *Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he.* She has sought and found the truth. The hope rising in her heart receives full confirmation; and a revelation not yet so clearly and expressly given by Jesus to Israel is granted to this alien, whose heart is prepared for its reception.

Ver. 27. *And upon this came his disciples; and they marvelled that he talked with a woman: yet no man said, What seekest thou? or, Why talkest thou with her?* To talk with a woman in public was one of six things forbidden to a Rabbi. As the disciples were returning from the village, they wonderingly descry their Master thus engaged. Their surprise, no doubt, found expression in these very questions (asked among themselves) which the Evangelist speaks of as not addressed to their Lord. 'What seeketh He? what can He be in quest of that we cannot fur-

nish? or, if He is not seeking anything, why is He talking with a woman?' The questions uttered to one another they would have at once addressed to Jesus, but awe checked their impulse to speak. Something in His look may have restrained them; or the eager wondering attitude of the one, and the solemn earnestness of the Other, proclaiming the willing hearer and the earnest Teacher, may have forbidden them to interrupt such intercourse.

Ver. 28. *The woman therefore left her water-pot, and went her way into the city.* Therefore,—because, the conversation being interrupted, there was nothing to restrain her impulse to make known the marvels she had heard. In her eagerness she leaves her waterpot behind: the 'living water' has banished the thought of that which came from Jacob's well.—*And saith to the men, whom she would naturally meet on the roads and in the streets.*

Ver. 29. *Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did.* She fixes on the wonderful knowledge which the Stranger had displayed: what had impressed her must also convince them. Let them come for themselves, not rest on her testimony; and let them draw their own conclusions.—*Can this be the Christ?* Her own belief she expresses in the form of doubt, or problem to be solved; and every reader must feel how natural and wise was her procedure. To have declared herself convinced that the Stranger was the Christ would have done little towards persuading the men of her own village: even to have quoted the declaration which Jesus made might have been without effect upon those who had seen or heard nothing to authenticate such words.

Ver. 30. *They went out of the city, and were on their way unto him.* This verse is here introduced partly to show the immediate success of the woman's message (no slight evidence of the preparedness of Samaria for the gospel), and partly to make plain the words of Jesus in a later verse (ver. 35).

Ver. 31. *In the mean while the disciples prayed him, saying, Rabbi, eat.* Remembering His exhaustion with the journey (ver. 6), they begged Him thus to take advantage of this interval of rest.

Ver. 32. *But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not.* Literally, I have an 'eating' to eat. The word for 'meat' in ver. 34 is different from that used here, which rather denotes the meal, the partaking of the food, than the food itself. This 'eating' the disciples 'knew not.' The common rendering entirely obscures the meaning: our Lord does not say 'know not of,' but 'know not,'—ye have no experience of it. As yet, they had not learned the power of such work as His (the complete fulfilment of His Father's will, ver. 34) to satisfy every want.

Ver. 33. *Therefore said the disciples one to another, Hath any man brought him ought to eat?* Their perplexity is like that of the woman of Samaria in regard to the living water (ver. 11).

Ver. 34. *Jesus saith unto them, My meat is that I should do the will of him that sent me, and accomplish his work.* This is the first of many similar sayings in this Gospel (v. 30, vi. 38, vii. 18, viii. 50, ix. 4, xii. 49, 50, xiv. 31, xv. 10, xvii. 4), expressing our Lord's perfect loyalty to His Father's will, and complete devotion to the accomplishment of His Father's work.

The pursuit of this is not His joy, His purpose, His refreshment only, but His very food, that without which He cannot live. The 'will' to be 'done' may perhaps remind us of the action of the hour or the moment; the 'work' to be 'accomplished,' of the complete expression and fulfilment of the 'will.'

Ver. 35. **Say not ye.**—Has not your language this day been,—**There are yet four months, and then cometh the harvest?** As harvest began in the middle of April it was now the middle of December.—**Lo! I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and behold the fields, that they are white for harvesting.** As in this chapter we have heard of a natural and a spiritual eating or drinking,—water (ver. 10), food (ver. 32),—so here, introduced with equal suddenness, we have the thought of a spiritual harvest. Yet, distant as must have seemed the harvest to the disciples when they looked upon the fields, far more distant would seem the day when Samaritans could be gathered in to the garner of the Lord. But, lo! they are bid see, the fields are already white for harvesting. These words, we cannot doubt, were spoken by Jesus in sight of the Samaritans flocking towards Him (ver. 30): He saw the preparation of their hearts, the impression made by the woman's message, the faith which His own words would immediately bring forth; nay, He saw a harvest far more glorious than that of this day's labours, even that of the salvation of the world (comp. note on ver. 42).

Ver. 36. **Already he that reapeth receiveth reward, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together.** The figure is continued and amplified. Not only are the fields ready for harvesting, but the reaper is even now at work, and receiving his reward; and how glorious a reward! Not a lifeless store, but (as in the case of the springing water, ver. 14, and the eating that abideth, chap. vi. 27) fruit gathered for life eternal,—fruit that shall endure for ever in the fruition of the new life which Jesus brings. And all this takes place 'already' (the word even standing emphatically at the head of the sentence), that in the spiritual field—so quickly does the harvest follow the sowing of the seed—sower and reaper may rejoice together.

Ver. 37. **For herein is the word true, One soweth, and another reapeth.** For, in the spiritual field of which Jesus speaks, the familiar saying is true, has full reality (the word used signifying 'true,' as opposed not merely to what is false, but to all that is partial and imperfect),—that one has the labour of the sower, another the joy of the reaper.

Ver. 38. **I sent you to reap that whereon ye have not toiled: others have toiled, and ye have entered into their toil.** The disciples are the reapers of this harvest; their commission—including, however, that of the disciples of Jesus throughout all time—was to reap a harvest which had not been prepared by their own toil. Whatever toil may be theirs, it is toil in *reaping*,—in joyfully gathering the results of earlier toil. The surprise and gladness with which they would shortly witness the faith of the men of Sychar was an emblem of what should repeat itself continually in the history of the Church. While the disciples are reapers, this harvesting in Samaria shows clearly who is the sower, whose has been

the earlier toil. The words point to Jesus Himself. From beginning to end of the narrative His 'word,' first in the conversation with the woman, and then as spoken to the Samaritans (ver. 39), is the instrument by which the joyful result is gained. Nor must we limit our thought of His 'toil' to what is related of the work of this evening by Jacob's well. The 'toil' that has made any harvest possible is that of His *whole* mission. All that was necessary that He might be able to say 'I am the Christ,' the self-renunciation and sorrow and pain of His atoning and redeeming work,—virtually included in His one act of acceptance of that work, and present to His thought from the beginning,—is involved in His 'toil.' He says, indeed, '*Others have toiled*,' and neither here nor in chap. iii. II can we take the plural as simply standing for the singular. He Himself is chiefly intended, but others are joined as having shared in the preparatory work. He had been alone in conversing with the woman of Samaria; but He had taken up and made use of all that she had received from the teaching of Moses (ver. 25), and all that the Jews had learnt from the prophets. Thus He includes with Himself those who had prepared the way for His coming. For Him, and therefore with Him, they too had 'toiled;' but all His servants who come after Him find the field prepared, the toil past, the harvest of that toil ready to be reaped.

Ver. 39. **And from that city many of the Samaritans believed in him because of the word of the woman, bearing witness, He told me all things that ever I did.** The arrangement of the words shows the prominence which John would give to the thought that many Samaritans believed in Jesus. Their faith, too, was only mediately called forth by the woman's word, for the Evangelist describes her by his favourite and most expressive term, as one 'bearing witness' concerning Jesus.

Ver. 40. **When therefore the Samaritans were come unto him, they besought him that he would abide with them: and he abode there two days.** Mark the contrast between Judea repelling and Samaria inviting: a dead and petrified orthodoxy may be more proof against the word of life than heresy.

Vers. 41, 42. **And many more believed because of his word; and they said unto the woman, No longer because of thy speaking do we believe: for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is indeed the Saviour of the world.** Among those that heard the Saviour were evidently some who had first believed because of the woman's testimony ('*No longer . . .*'): hearing for themselves, they were led into a deeper faith.—There is nothing disparaging, as some have supposed, in the use of the word 'speech' or 'speaking' in regard to the woman's message: the expression is simply equivalent to *because thou spakest*, and relates to the fact of speaking, in contrast with the substance of the teaching,—the 'word' of Jesus Himself.—The last words in the confession of the Samaritans (*this is indeed the Saviour of the world*) contain no real difficulty. The teaching of vers. 21-24 directly led to the recognition of this truth. It was much to realise that Jesus, as Messiah, was a Saviour, not merely a Prophet who would bring a revelation from God. But when the thought of a Saviour of Jews alone is once overpassed, there is no intermediate posi-



tion between this and the conception contained in the words before us—a Saviour of the world. The Evangelist, in recording them, plainly intends

to point out to us the special significance of the whole narrative: the conversion of Samaritans was a promise of the conversion of the world.

## CHAPTER IV. 43-54.

### *Jesus in Galilee.*

- 43 **N**OW after "two<sup>1</sup> days he departed<sup>2</sup> thence, and went<sup>3</sup> a Ver. 40.  
 44 into Galilee. For <sup>b</sup> Jesus himself testified,<sup>4</sup> that a b Comp. Matt. xiii. 57 ; Mark vi. 4 ; Luke iv. 24 ; also Luke xiii. 33, 34 ; Chap. ii. 23 ; iii. 2.  
 45 prophet hath no honour in his own country. Then when<sup>5</sup> he was come into Galilee, the Galileans received him, <sup>c</sup> having seen all the things that<sup>6</sup> he did at Jerusalem at the feast : for they also went unto the feast.  
 46 So Jesus came again<sup>7</sup> into <sup>d</sup> Cana of Galilee, where he made d Chap. ii. 1  
 47 the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman,<sup>8</sup> whose son was sick at <sup>e</sup> Capernaum. When he heard that Jesus was <sup>f</sup> come out of Judea into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him e Chap. ii. 12. f Ver. 54.  
 48 that he would come down, and heal his son : for he was at the point of death. Then said Jesus<sup>9</sup> unto him, <sup>g</sup> Except ye see g Chap. ii. 18, vi. 30 ; 1 Cor. i. 22. See chap. ii. 23. h Matt. xxiv. 24 ; Acts ii. 19, etc.  
 49 <sup>h</sup> signs and <sup>i</sup> wonders, ye will not believe. The nobleman<sup>10</sup> saith unto him, Sir,<sup>11</sup> come down ere my child die. Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way ; thy son liveth. And<sup>12</sup> the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken<sup>13</sup> unto him, and he went  
 51 his way. And as he was now going down, his servants met  
 52 him, and told <sup>j</sup> him,<sup>14</sup> saying, Thy son liveth.<sup>15</sup> Then enquired he of them<sup>16</sup> the hour when he began to amend. And they said<sup>17</sup> unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left  
 53 him. So the father knew<sup>18</sup> that *it was* at the same hour, in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth : and himself believed,  
 54 <sup>k</sup> and his whole house. This *is* again <sup>l</sup> the second miracle *that* i Acts xvi. 34. xviii. 8. k Chap. ii. 1-11. l Vers. 3, 47.  
 Jesus did,<sup>19</sup> when he was come<sup>20</sup> out of Judea into Galilee.

<sup>1</sup> And after the two

<sup>2</sup> went forth

<sup>3</sup> omit and went

<sup>4</sup> bare witness

<sup>5</sup> When therefore

<sup>6</sup> all things whatsoever

<sup>7</sup> He came therefore again

<sup>8</sup> king's officer

<sup>9</sup> king's officer

<sup>9</sup> Jesus therefore said <sup>10</sup> king's officer

<sup>11</sup> Lord

<sup>12</sup> omit And <sup>13</sup> spake <sup>14</sup> omit and told him

<sup>15</sup> that his son lived

<sup>16</sup> He enquired of them therefore

<sup>17</sup> They said therefore

<sup>18</sup> perceived <sup>19</sup> This Jesus again did, as a second sign, <sup>20</sup> having come

CONTENTS. This section of the Gospel brings Jesus before us in Galilee, in His intercourse with the Galileans, and in particular with the king's officer, who may be regarded as in a certain sense their representative. The object is still the same as that which we have traced from chap. ii. 12. Examples have been given of the manner in which Judea and Samaria submit to the word of Jesus, and these are now crowned by an instance of similar submission on the part of Galilee. The section divides itself into two subordinate parts—

(1) vers. 43-45, introductory, after the manner of the introduction to the story of Nicodemus in ii. 23-25, and of that to the visit to Samaria in iv. 1-4; (2) vers. 46-54, the account of the intercourse of Jesus with the king's officer.

Vers. 43, 44. And after the two days he went forth thence into Galilee. For Jesus himself bare witness, that a prophet hath no honour in his own country. The connection between these two verses is a question on which the most different opinions have been held. The latter verse

evidently assigns a reason why Jesus went into Galilee; and (we may add) ver. 45, which begins with '*When therefore,*' must be understood as stating that the welcome He received in Galilee was in full accordance with the motive of His action as stated in ver. 44. These two conditions of interpretation must evidently be observed, and yet in several solutions of the difficulty one or other of them is plainly set aside. Were we to judge only from what is before us, we should say that the words must mean: Jesus went into Galilee and not into His own country, for there He would be a prophet without honour; and so, when He came into Galilee, He was welcomed by the people. If such be the true sense, 'His own country' must be *Judea*. This is certainly not the meaning of these words in the earlier Gospels, and hence the difficulty. A similar saying is recorded by every one of the three earlier Evangelists, and in each case it is introduced to explain the neglect of the claims of Jesus on the part of the inhabitants of Nazareth, the city of Galilee in which His early years were spent (Matt. xiii. 57; Mark vi. 4; Luke iv. 24). In one case, Mark vi. 4, the saying is enlarged so as to apply especially to kindred, and not to country alone. If then we have rightly given the sense of these verses of John, it must follow that, though the saying quoted is nearly the same here as elsewhere, the application is wholly different, 'His own country' being in the one case Galilee (or rather Nazareth), and in the other Judea. This is by many held to be impossible. But is it really so? Would not such a difference be in exact accord with the varied aims of the first three Evangelists and the fourth, as they respectively relate the Galilean and the Judean ministry of our Lord? The saying is one that may be used with various shades of meaning. Used in relation to Nazareth, the proverb brings before us the unwillingness with which the claims of a prophet are listened to by those who have grown up with him, have familiarly known him, have regarded him as one of themselves. Used in relation to Judea, the true home and fatherland of the prophets, the land which contained the city of Messiah's birth, the city associated with Him alike in ancient prophecy and in popular expectation (see chap. vii. 41, 42), the words surely signify that a prophet is unhonoured by those to whom he is especially sent: Jesus came unto His own country, and 'His own received Him not.' This interpretation then (which is that of Origen, in the third century) seems completely to meet the requirements of the passage. In Samaria Jesus had not intended to remain, and He must therefore either return to Judea or go into Galilee; to Judea He will not go, for the reason given; He departs therefore into Galilee. There is only one objection of any weight to the view we have taken—viz., that in vers. 1-3 of this chapter a somewhat different motive for leaving Judea is assigned; yet even there, though success in winning disciples is implied, it is said that He left the land because of the Pharisees. If this last consideration does not entirely remove the difficulty, it is to be borne in mind that our knowledge of the circumstances is imperfect, and that, even in its utmost force, the objection is much smaller and less important than those which lie in the way of the other interpretation of 'His own country.' For such as think that Galilee must be intended there are but two

explanations possible: these we give, only expressing our belief that they involve difficulties much greater than those presented by the other view. (1) Jesus went into Galilee, for there He would not meet with the honour of a true faith; and there, consequently, He had a work to do, a mission to prosecute: when therefore He came into Galilee, although He was welcomed, it was from unworthy not worthy motives. (2) Jesus now at length went into Galilee, for (He had avoided Galilee in the belief that) a prophet has no honour in his own country: such honour, however, He has now won in Judea, outside His own country; when therefore He was come into Galilee, the Galileans received Him.

Ver. 45. When therefore he was come into Galilee, the Galileans received him, having seen all things whatsoever he did at Jerusalem at the feast: for they also went unto the feast. The 'feast' is no doubt the Passover of which we read in chap. ii.; and the faith of these Galileans is precisely similar to that of the 'many' spoken of in ver. 23 of that chapter,—real, but not of the highest kind.

Ver. 46. He came therefore again into Cana of Galilee, where he made the water wine. His coming revives the fame of that first miracle, and the report of His arrival quickly spreads.—And there was a certain king's officer, whose son was sick at Capernaum. This officer was probably in the (civil or military) service of Herod Antipas, a Tetrarch, but often styled a king (see Matt. xiv. 1, 9; Mark vi. 14, etc.). The officer himself may have been in attendance on the court in Tiberias, but his son (probably an only son, as the Greek literally means 'of whom the son . . .') was lying ill at Capernaum.

Ver. 47. When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judea into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would come down, and heal his son: for he was at the point of death. The faith of this father rested on the miracles of which he had heard. Would Jesus but come down from Cana to Capernaum, his son also might be healed. But Jesus must always reprove the spirit which requires 'signs and wonders' before yielding faith; and He does it now.

Ver. 48. Jesus therefore said unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe. The charge against the father is that his apparent faith is only thinly-veiled unbelief.—The words seem most suitably addressed to a Jew (comp. Matt. xii. 39, xvi. 1; 1 Cor. i. 22): on the other hand, the officer's connection with the court leads rather to belief that he was a Gentile. As to 'signs,' see the notes on chap. ii. 11, 23. As a 'sign' is the highest, so a 'wonder' is the least noble name for a miracle. In so far as the miracle is a prodigy and excites amazement, it is a 'wonder.'

Ver. 49. The king's officer saith unto him, Lord, come down ere my child die. The answer of Jesus, which had seemed perhaps to imply cold neglect, calls forth an impassioned appeal for pity and help; there were no moments to be lost,—even now the help may come too late. Jesus was but educating—refining and deepening—his faith.

Ver. 50. Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth. The man believed the word that Jesus spake unto him, and he went his way. Jesus does not need the passionate appeal:

the prayer has been already granted. 'Thy son liveth' does not mean, 'is made to live now after thy second petition'; but, 'even while the word is in thy mouth, or before it was so, thy son liveth.' The meaning, in short, is not, I perform the cure at this instant; but rather, I have performed it, the work is done, thy son is recovered. He will not come to heal the child; there is no need that He should do so, the child is already whole. Will the father believe the word? He will, for his faith is purified and changed: it is now faith in the word of Jesus, though no sign or wonder has been seen.

Ver. 51. And as he was now going down, his servants met him, saying that his son lived. The word 'now' (or 'already') may appear superfluous, but it may possibly imply that some time had elapsed since the words of ver. 50 were spoken,—'when he had now begun the journey.' Business may have detained him for a few hours in Cana; and if it did so, it would be a testimony to the firmness of that faith with which he had now believed in Jesus. 'Going down,'—because Cana is situated in the hilly district, several hundred feet above the level of the Sea of Galilee.

Ver. 52. He enquired of them therefore the hour when he began to amend. They said therefore unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him. As the distance between Cana and Capernaum is not above five-and-twenty miles, it may seem strange that the officer should not have reached his home the same day. If the 'seventh hour' were reckoned from sunrise, the time of the cure would be a little later than noon; in that case it would be necessary to suppose that the servants were following the familiar Jewish reckoning of time, and regarding sunset as the commencement of a new day. It seems, however, much more probable (see the note on ver. 6) that by the 'seventh hour' we must understand 6 to 7 P.M. Even without the supposition that the father had been detained in Cana, this will suit all the circumstances of the narrative.—The words 'began to amend' do not suggest any hesitation on the father's part as to the completeness of the cure. He had believed the word 'thy son liveth' (ver. 50), and what he asks now is as to the hour at which his child had been stopped upon the road to death, and turned back upon that to full health and strength.

Ver. 53. So the father perceived that it was at the same hour in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth: and himself believed, and his whole house. Believed—that is, with a faith increased and confirmed: true faith he had manifested before.

Many have supposed that this king's officer may have been Chuza, 'Herod's steward' (Luke viii. 3), whose wife Joanna was amongst those women who ministered of their substance to the wants of Jesus and His disciples.

Ver. 54. This Jesus again did, as a second sign, having come out of Judea into Galilee. The order of the original is remarkable, and we endeavour to represent it by a translation which, if literal, is yet sufficiently idiomatical. 'This' stands alone; 'a second sign' is in apposition with it. There is thus by means of 'again' and 'second' a double statement as to the position of the miracle; and as we know that other miracles, not numbered, were wrought in Galilee (chap. vi.), and that there had already been 'signs' also in Judea (chap. ii. 23), the two points upon which our attention is fixed seem to be—(1) that this miracle was wrought in Galilee; (2) that it was a second miracle there. The first of these points receives importance from the fact that the 'sign' now related was done after Jesus had left 'His own country,' rejected by 'His own' to be accepted by Galileans: the second magnifies the sign itself, for the mention of it as a 'second' appears to flow from the tendency of the Evangelist to give double pictures of any truth which possesses in his eyes peculiar weight. This is the case here. From the first Jesus showed that His mission was not confined to Judea. It included Galilee, a province representative not of Jews only but of Gentiles, out of which the Jews thought that no prophet could come (vii. 52): it was not a local but a universal mission.

It is not necessary to discuss the question whether this miracle is identical with that related in Matt. viii. 5-13; Luke vii. 2-10. We may wonder that such a question was ever raised. One point of similarity exists, in that in each case the cure was performed at a distance: in all other respects the narratives are wholly different,—agreeing neither in time, nor in place, nor in the station of the persons concerned, nor in the character of the faith evinced.

## CHAPTER V. 1-18.

### *Jesus at the Pool of Bethesda.*

- 1 AFTER this<sup>1</sup> there was a<sup>2</sup> feast of the Jews; and Jesus<sup>a</sup> went up to Jerusalem. Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep market<sup>3</sup> a pool, which is called<sup>3</sup> in the<sup>b</sup> Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porches.<sup>4</sup> In these lay a great multitude of impotent<sup>5</sup> folk, of blind, halt, withered, waiting for the moving of the water. For an angel went down at a

<sup>1</sup> these things

<sup>4</sup> porticos

<sup>2</sup> by the sheep-pool

<sup>5</sup> omit great

<sup>3</sup> the pool which is surnamed

<sup>6</sup> sick

<sup>a</sup> Comp. chap. ii. 13.

<sup>b</sup> Chap. xix. 13, 17, 20, xx. 16.

<sup>c</sup> Matt. xii. 10

- certain season into the pool, and troubled the water: whosoever then first after the troubling of the water stepped in was made whole of whatsoever disease he had.<sup>7</sup> And a certain man was there, which had an infirmity thirty and eight years.<sup>8</sup>
- 6 When Jesus saw him lie,<sup>9</sup> and knew<sup>10</sup> that he had<sup>11</sup> been now a long time *in that case*, he<sup>12</sup> saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole? The impotent<sup>13</sup> man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water is<sup>14</sup> troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me.
- 8 Jesus saith unto him, <sup>d</sup>Rise, take up thy bed, and walk. <sup>d</sup>See Matt. ix. 6.
- 9 And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked: and <sup>e</sup>on the same day was the sabbath.<sup>15</sup> <sup>e</sup>Chap. ix. 14
- 10 The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured, It is the sabbath day: <sup>f</sup>it is <sup>f</sup>not lawful for thee to carry *thy* bed.<sup>17</sup> <sup>f</sup>Neh. xiii. 19; Jer. xvii. 21; Matt. xii. 2; chap. vii. 23. ix. 16
- 11 He<sup>18</sup> answered them, He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk. Then asked they him,<sup>19</sup> What man is that<sup>20</sup> which said unto thee, Take up thy bed,<sup>21</sup> and walk? And<sup>22</sup> he that was healed wist not who it was: for Jesus had conveyed himself away,<sup>23</sup> a multitude being in *that* place. Afterward<sup>24</sup> Jesus findeth him in the temple,<sup>25</sup> and said unto him, Behold, thou art<sup>27</sup> made whole: sin no more, lest a worse thing come unto thee.<sup>26</sup> The man departed,<sup>29</sup> and told the Jews that it was Jesus, which had made him whole.
- 16 And therefore<sup>30</sup> did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him,<sup>31</sup> because he had done<sup>32</sup> these things on the sabbath day.
- 17 But Jesus<sup>33</sup> answered them, <sup>g</sup>My Father worketh hitherto,<sup>34</sup> <sup>g</sup>Ver. 19.
- 18 and I work.<sup>35</sup> Therefore<sup>36</sup> the Jews <sup>h</sup>sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken<sup>37</sup> the sabbath, but said also that God was <sup>i</sup>his Father,<sup>38</sup> making himself <sup>h</sup>equal with God. <sup>h</sup>Chap. vii. 1, 19. <sup>i</sup>Rom. viii. 32. <sup>h</sup>Chap. i. 18, x. 30, 33, xvii. 20.
- <sup>1</sup> omit from waiting in third verse to end of fourth verse
- <sup>8</sup> which had been thirty and eight years in his sickness
- <sup>9</sup> Jesus seeing him lying there <sup>10</sup> perceiving <sup>11</sup> hath <sup>12</sup> omit he
- <sup>13</sup> sick <sup>14</sup> hath been <sup>15</sup> and it was the sabbath on that day
- <sup>16</sup> It is the sabbath day, and <sup>17</sup> to take up the bed <sup>18</sup> But he
- <sup>19</sup> They asked him <sup>20</sup> Who is the man <sup>21</sup> omit thy bed <sup>22</sup> But
- <sup>23</sup> withdrew himself <sup>24</sup> After these things <sup>25</sup> temple-courts
- <sup>27</sup> hath been <sup>28</sup> sin no longer, that some worse thing come not unto thee
- <sup>29</sup> went away <sup>30</sup> And for this cause <sup>31</sup> omit and sought to slay him
- <sup>32</sup> did <sup>33</sup> he <sup>34</sup> until now
- <sup>35</sup> I also work <sup>36</sup> For this cause therefore <sup>37</sup> broke
- <sup>38</sup> but also called God his own Father.

CONTENTS. With the beginning of this chapter we enter upon the fourth and leading division of the Gospel, extending to the close of chap. xii. Its object is to set Jesus forth in the height of His conflict with ignorance and error and sin. More particularly, the Redeemer appears throughout it in the light in which He had already been pre-

sented in the Prologue, as the culminating-point and fulfilment of all previous revelations of God, whether in the Old Testament or in nature. In chap. v. He is the fulfilment of the Sabbath, the greatest of all the institutions given through Moses. The subordinate parts of the first section of the chap. are—(1) vers. 1-9, the account of the miracle

at the pool of Bethesda; (2) vers. 10-18, the opposition of the Jews, leading to the proclamation of the great truths contained in the second section.

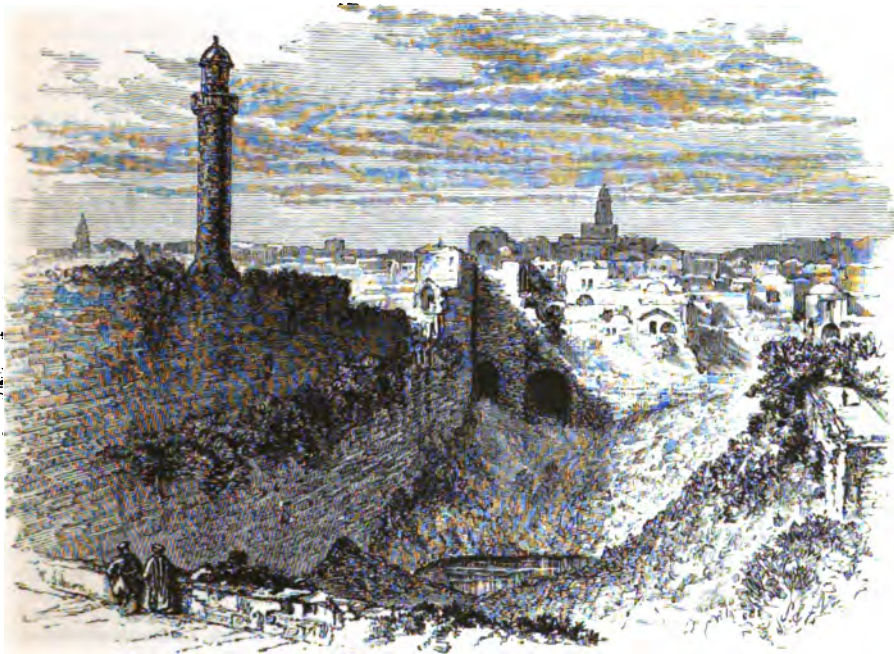
Ver. 1. After these things there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. No more is said as to the visit to Galilee than what we find in iv. 43-54. We are taken at once to the close of the visit, when Jesus went up again to Jerusalem. The occasion of His going up was the occurrence of a festival. Contrary to his wont, the Evangelist says nothing of the nature of the festival, merely adding (as in ii. 13, vii. 2, etc.) the words 'of the Jews.' It is quite impossible here to examine the attempts which have been made to give more precision to this statement. Not a few Greek manuscripts and other authorities endeavour to remove the difficulty by inserting the article, and reading 'the feast of the Jews,' an expression usually thought to mean the Passover. The weight of evidence, however, is distinctly in favour of reading 'a feast;' and we may safely say that with this reading the Passover cannot be intended. Were it possible to believe that the great national festival is spoken of, the consequences would be important. In that case four Passovers would be mentioned in this Gospel (ii. 13, v. 1, vi. 4, xviii. 28); and of one whole year of our Lord's public ministry the only record preserved would be that contained in the chapter before us. The critical evidence, however, sets the discussion at rest so far as the Passover is concerned, and we have only to inquire which of the remaining festivals best suits the few statements of the Evangelist bearing on this part of the history. Our two landmarks are iv. 35 and vi. 4. The former verse assigns the journey through Samaria to the month of December, the latter shows that the events recorded in chap. vi. took place in March or April; hence, in all probability, the festival of chap. v. 1 falls within the three or four months between these limits. If so, the feasts of Pentecost (about May), Tabernacles (September or October), and the Dedication of the Temple (December) are at once excluded; and no other feast remains except that of Purim, which fell about a month earlier than the Passover. This feast, therefore, is now generally believed to be the one referred to here. The objections are perhaps not insurmountable. It is said that our Lord would hardly go up to Jerusalem for Purim. As to this, however, we are clearly unable to judge; in many ways unknown to us, that feast may have furnished a fitting occasion for His visit. Its human origin would not be an obstacle (comp. chap. x. 22), nor would its national and patriotic character. It is true that there were abuses in the celebration of Purim, and that excess and licence seem to have been common. Still we cannot doubt that many devout Israelites would be occupied with thankful recollection of the wonderful deliverance of their nation commemorated by the feast, rather than with revelry and boisterous mirth. One other objection may be noticed. The feast of Purim was not allowed to fall on a Sabbath, and hence, it is argued, cannot be thought of here. But nothing in the chapter leads necessarily to the supposition that the Sabbath on which the miracle was wrought was the day of the feast. The feast was the occasion of our Lord's going up to Jerusalem: the Sabbath may have fallen soon after His arrival in the city; more than this we have no right to say. If therefore we look at the historical

course of the narrative, it would seem that, of the solutions hitherto offered, that which fixes upon Purim as the feast referred to in the text is the most probable. But there is another question of great importance, which must not be overlooked. Why did John, whose custom it is to mark very clearly the festivals of which he speaks (see ii. 13, 23, vi. 4, vii. 2, x. 22, xi. 55, xii. 1, xiii. 1, xviii. 39, xix. 14), write so indefinitely here? The feast before us is the only one in the whole Gospel on which a doubt can rest. We may well ask the reason of this, and the only reply which it seems possible to give is that the indefiniteness is the result of design. The Evangelist omits the name of the feast, that the reader may not attach to it a significance which was not intended. To John,—through clearness of insight, not from power of fancy,—every action of his Master was fraught with deep significance; and no one who receives the Lord Jesus as he received Him can hesitate to admit in all His words and deeds a fulness of meaning, a perfection of fitness, immeasurably beyond what can be attributed to the highest of human prophets. Our Lord's relation to the whole Jewish economy is never absent from John's thought. Jesus enters the Jewish temple (chap. ii. 14): His own words can be understood by those only who recognise that He Himself is the true Temple of God. The ordained festivals of the nation find their fulfilment in Him. Never, we may say, is any festival named in this Gospel in connection with our Lord, without an intention on the writer's part that we should see the truth which he saw, and behold in it a type of his Master or His work. If this be true, the indefiniteness of the language here is designed to prevent our resting on the thought of this particular festival as fulfilled in Jesus, and to lead to the concentration of our attention on the *Sabbath* shortly to be mentioned, which in this chapter has an importance altogether exceptional. Were it possible to think that the 'feast' referred to was the Sabbath itself, all difficulties would be at once removed.

Ver. 2. Now there is at Jerusalem by the sheep-pool the pool which is surnamed in the Hebrew tongue Bethesda, having five porticoes. The use of the present tense, *there is*, may seem to indicate that the pool still remained after the destruction of Jerusalem; unless indeed we adopt the opinion that, as John in all probability committed to writing very early his recollections of his Lord's discourses and works, an incidental mark of his practice is left us in this verse.—The translation of the words that follow is much disputed. The Greek word for 'pool' may be written in two ways. That which is usually adopted gives the meaning, 'there is by the sheep . . . a pool, that which is surnamed,' etc.; and the question is how the ellipsis is to be filled up. There is no authority for supplying 'market,' as is done in the Authorised Version; and that method of supplying the blank is now generally abandoned. The idea of most writers on the Gospel is that the 'sheep-gate' (Neh. iii. 1, 32, xii. 39) is intended, but we have found no example of a similar omission of the word 'gate.' We are thus led to examine the other mode of writing the Greek word 'pool,' from which results the translation, 'there is by the sheep-pool the pool that is surnamed;' and to this rendering of the sentence there appears to be no valid objection. It may, indeed, seem strange that the situation of the pool called Bethesda should be defined by its

proximity to another pool about which no information is preserved; but it must be remembered that in questions relating to the topography of Jerusalem arguments from the silence of historians are not worth much. Early Christian writers also (Eusebius and Jerome) do actually speak of a sheep-pool in Jerusalem in connection with this passage. Ammonius tells us that the pool was so called from the habit of gathering together there the sheep that were to be sacrificed for the feast; similarly Theodore of Mopsuestia. And it is very interesting to notice that an early traveller in the Holy Land (about the first half of the fourth century) speaks of 'twin pools in Jerusalem, having five porticos.' We conclude therefore that John defines the position of the pool with which the following narrative is connected by its nearness to another pool, probably of larger size,

and at that time well known as the 'sheep-pool.' It is remarkable that of the other pool the proper name is not mentioned, but only a Hebrew or Syro-Chaldaic *second* name or *surname*. What this name is and what it signifies can hardly be determined with certainty, as several forms of the name are given in Greek manuscripts and other authorities. If we assume that Bethesda is the true form, the most probable explanation is 'House of grace.' It is easy to see that such a name might naturally arise, and might indeed become the common appellation amongst those who associated a beneficent healing power with the waters of the pool; and it is also easy to understand how it was the second name that lingered in John's thought,—a name which to him bore a high significance, recalling the 'grace' which came through Jesus Christ (i. 17), and of which a wonderful manifesta-



Traditional Pool of Bethesda.

tion was made at this very spot. The pool called Bethesda had five porticos; probably it was five-sided, and surrounded by an arched verandah or colonnade, closed in on the outward side. The hot springs of Tiberias are so surrounded at this day, and it is at least possible that the style of architecture may be traditional.

Ver. 3. In these lay a multitude of sick folk, of blind, halt, withered. Under the shelter of these porticos many such were laid day after day. The general term 'sick folk' receives its explanation afterwards as consisting of those who were blind, or lame, or whose bodies or limbs were wasted.—The omission of the remaining words of ver. 3 and of the whole of ver. 4 is supported by a weight of authority which it is impossible to set aside. The addition belongs, however, to a very early date, for its contents are clearly referred to by Tertullian early in the third century. It is

evidently an explanatory comment first written in the margin by those who saw that the words of ver. 7 imply incidents or opinions of which the narrative as it stands gives no account. The well-intentioned gloss was not long in finding its way into the text; and, once there, it gave the weight of the apostle's sanction to a statement which really represents only the popular belief. It will be seen that, when the unauthorised addition is removed, there is nothing in the text to support the impression that wonderful cures were actually wrought. The phenomena are those of an intermittent spring; and the various circumstances described, the concourse of sick, the eager expectation, the implicit faith in the healing virtue of the waters and in the recurring supernatural agency, find too many parallels in history to make it necessary to suppose that there was any supernatural virtue in the pool. It may be observed

that the ordinary translation of the added words is not quite correct. The angel's visit was not looked for 'at a certain season' (as if after some fixed and regular interval), but 'at seasons,' from time to time.

Ver. 5. **And a certain man was there, which had been thirty and eight years in his sickness.** This sufferer (apparently one of the 'withered,' though not altogether destitute of the power of motion) had endured thirty-eight years of weakness. How long he had been wont to resort to Bethesda we cannot tell: it may have been only for days or even hours.

Ver. 6. **Jesus seeing him lying there, and perceiving that he hath been now a long time in that case, saith unto him, Wilt thou be made whole?** The first movement is altogether on the side of Jesus: comp. ver. 21 ('whom He will'). His knowledge of the case is by direct intuition (comp. ii. 25), not, as we believe, the result of inquiry. In Matt. viii. 2 the leper's words to Jesus were, 'Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean,' and the answer was, 'I will.' Here the address of Jesus contains His 'I will,' for His question to the man is 'Dost thou will? if thou dost I do also.' Jesus has the will to heal him: does he answer this with a corresponding will, or is he like those to whom Jesus would have given life, but who 'would' not come to Him? (ver. 40). It will be observed that there is no broad separation made between bodily and spiritual healing. The man certainly understood the former, but we cannot limit the meaning of Christ's words by the apprehension of those to whom He speaks, and the subsequent narrative seems to imply more than the restoration of bodily health.

Ver. 7. **The sick man answered him, Sir, I have no man, when the water hath been troubled, to put me into the pool: but while I am coming, another steppeth down before me.** The man does not give a direct answer to the question 'Wilt thou?' but the answer sought is implied. He had the will, but he had not the power to do what he believed must be done before healing could be obtained. The very extremity of his need rendered unavailing his repeated efforts to be the first to reach the waters when the mysterious troubling had taken place. He had no friend to help, to hurry him to the pool at the moment when the waters were thought to have received their healing power.

Ver. 8. **Jesus saith unto him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk.** The cure is performed in the most simple and direct manner. It is not said that Jesus laid His hands on him (Luke xiii. 13), or that He touched him. He speaks: the man hears the voice of the Son of God and lives (vers. 25, 28, 29).

Ver. 9. **And immediately the man was made whole, and took up his bed, and walked.** The result is described in words which are a simple echo of the command. Whilst they testify the power of the healing word, they also bring into view the man's 'will' and 'faith,' as shown in his immediate readiness to obey the command of Jesus. Immediately he was made whole, and took up his bed (the mattress which, laid upon the ground, had formed his bed), and walked.—**And it was the sabbath on that day.** The verses which follow show how important is this notice. As Jesus chose out this one sick man to be the

object of His grace, so He of set purpose chose the sabbath day for the performance of the miracle.

Ver. 10. **The Jews therefore said unto him that was cured, It is the sabbath day, and it is not lawful for thee to take up the bed.** The Jews—some of the rulers of the people (see note on i. 19)—who had not been present at the miracle met the man as he departed carrying his bed. As guardians of the law they challenge him, and condemn the bearing of burdens on the sabbath. It is very important for us to determine whether in so doing they were right or wrong. Were they faithfully carrying out the letter of the law of Moses, or were they enforcing one of those traditions by which they destroyed its spirit? We have no hesitation in adopting the former view. The question must be decided apart from the miracle, of which at this moment the Jews seem to have had no knowledge. It is true that, even had it been known by them, their judgment would not have been altered; they would have equally condemned the healing on the sabbath (see Luke xiii. 14), since there had been no question of life and death. When, too, they afterwards hear what has been done (ver. 11) there is no change in their tone and spirit; and our Lord's own reference to this miracle (chap. vii. 23) seems to show that, so far from convincing them, it had roused their special indignation. But at the point of time now before us the lawfulness of healing on the sabbath was not in question. They met a man carrying his bed in the streets of Jerusalem on the sacred day. The law of Moses forbade any work on that day; and the special enactments in the Pentateuch (the command to kindle no fire, Ex. xxxv. 3, and the judgment on the man who gathered sticks, Num. xv. 35) show how this law was to be interpreted. In Jer. xvii. 21-23, moreover (comp. Neh. xiii. 19), this very act, the bearing of burdens, is explicitly condemned. What could they do but condemn it? Would the same act be regarded otherwise in England at the present hour? One other consideration remains, and it is decisive. Our Lord's answer to the Jews (ver. 17) makes no reference to their casuistical distinctions or to traditions by which the law was overlaid. It differs altogether in tone and spirit from the reproofs which we read in Luke xiii. 15, xiv. 5. Had their objection lain against the healing, we cannot doubt that they would have brought on themselves the like rebuke: here however they were right in holding the man's action, so far as they understood it at the moment, to be an infraction of their law.

Ver. 11. **But he answered them, He that made me whole, the same said unto me, Take up thy bed, and walk.** Whether the man knew the Rabbinical saying that a prophet's command to transgress the letter of the law was to be obeyed, save in the case of idolatry, may be doubted; but the impression made on him by the majesty of Jesus was sufficient to guide his answer. Divine power had healed him: a command from One who wielded such power could not transgress the law of God.

Ver. 12. **They asked him, Who is the man which said unto thee, Take up, and walk?** The mention of the cure has no effect in leading them to suspend their judgment. It would indeed present to them a new transgression of the law; but they content themselves with passing



it by, and laying stress on what they consider an undeniable breach of the very letter of the commandment. This complete indifference to the work of mercy plainly illustrates the hard-hearted malice of 'the Jews.'

Ver. 13. **But he that was healed wist not who it was.** We need not wonder that this man, unable to move from place to place, perhaps only recently come to Jerusalem, had no previous knowledge of Jesus.—**For Jesus withdrew himself, a multitude being in that place.** After his cure, too, he could hear nothing of his benefactor, for, to avoid the recognition and enthusiasm of the multitude (comp. chap. vi. 15), Jesus withdrew,—literally 'slipped aside,' became suddenly lost to sight.—Here, as always, the 'multitude' or mass of the people is to be carefully distinguished from 'the Jews.' The conflict between Jesus and the Jews has begun: all His actions deepen their hatred against Him. The 'multitude,' on the other hand, is the object of His compassion: from time to time they follow Him eagerly, however slight may be their knowledge of His true teaching and aims (vi. 2, 15). In subsequent chapters we shall often have to call attention to the contrast between 'the Jews' and the 'multitude'; and it will be seen that some passages are almost inexplicable unless this most important distinction is kept clearly in view.

Ver. 14. **After these things Jesus findeth him in the temple courts.** Some time afterwards, probably not on the same day, the man is found in the temple courts. There is no reason to doubt that he had gone there for purposes of devotion, having recognised the Divine deliverance. Throughout the narrative he stands in strong contrast with the Jews, resembling in this the blind man of whom we read in chap. ix.—**And said unto him, Behold, thou hast been made whole: sin no longer, that some worse thing come not unto thee.** The words of Jesus imply much more than the general connection of sin and suffering; they show that in this case the sickness had in some way been the result and the punishment of sin. Yet sorer judgment will follow a return to the life of sin (Matt. xii. 45).

Ver. 15. **The man went away, and told the Jews that it was Jesus which had made him whole.** The Jews asked who had commanded him to take up his bed. The man's reply, given as soon as he had learnt the name of his Deliverer, was that Jesus had made him whole. The careful variation in the expression seems to repel the supposition that he gave the information through ingratitude or in treachery. Probably his motive was a sense of duty to those who, whatever might be their spirit, were constituted authorities who had a right to be satisfied as to all breaches of the law, with whom also would rest the decision whether he must bring a sin-offering to atone for his violation of the sabbath. Whilst, however, this may have been the man's motive, we can hardly doubt that John (who here uses a word, 'declared,' which with him often has a solemn significance) sees in the act a Divine mission. In his eyes the man is for the moment a prophet of the Most High, a messenger of warning, to the guilty Jews.

Ver. 16. **And for this cause did the Jews persecute Jesus, because he did these things on the sabbath day.** The man whose cure had been the occasion of the action taken by the Jews now

passes from view. For the second time Jesus and 'the Jews' are brought face to face. He had appeared in the temple (ii. 14) to put an end to the abuses they had permitted or fostered, and to vindicate the holiness of His Father's house. Then He offered Himself to Israel as the Son of God; He declared Himself the antitype of their temple, the idea of which (as God's dwelling-place) had its fulfilment in Himself alone. As by supernatural influence on those who trafficked in the Holy Place He had then challenged the attention of the rulers of Israel, so now by a wonderful sign He fixed on Himself the eyes of all (vii. 21). This time it is not on the temple that He lays His hand, but on the law, the cherished commandment of the sabbath. It is not as one who with authority checks abuses which none could defend, though from them many derived gain, that our Lord now appears in Jerusalem: He comes as one who claims to be above the law, having the right, as Lawgiver, to set aside its letter. As the temple had its idea fulfilled in Himself, so was it with the sabbath. As to the Son of God God's house belonged, so to the Son of God belonged that Rest of God of which the sabbath was a type; and the sabbath cannot be broken by the Son of God. This is the light in which the following verses teach us to regard the whole narrative. The choice of the sabbath day for the miracle is the kernel of the paragraph. Had the Jews been teachable and free from prejudice, had they taken the miracle as the starting-point of their reasonings, they would have been prepared for hearing the ground of the claims of Jesus thus to regulate their law. 'How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles?' (ix. 16) was in truth a convincing argument, and by yielding to its force they would have been led to Jesus as humble seekers after truth. But because He 'did these things,' wrought such works and showed that He would persevere with them, they became and continued to be His persecutors.

Ver. 17. **But he answered them, My Father worketh until now: I also work.** In three different ways does our Lord rebut the charge which His foes so often brought against Him, that He broke the sabbath. At one time He showed that it was not the law but the vain tradition that He set aside (Matt. xii. 11; Luke xiii. 15, xiv. 5); at another He declared Himself as the Son of man Lord of the sabbath, and taught that the law of the sabbath must be determined from its aim and object (Mark ii. 27, 28); here only does He take even higher ground. God rested from His works of creation on the seventh day; this day was hallowed and set apart for man's rest from labour,—a rest which was the shadow of the rest of God, and which was designed to remove from man everything that might hinder him from entering in spirit into that fellowship with God which is perfect rest. From the creation to this very moment the Father hath been working; in His very rest upholding all things by the word of His power, providing all things for His creatures, working out the purpose of His love in their redemption. 'My Father worketh until now,' with no pause or intermission: 'I also work.' He who can thus call God His Father finds in the works of His Father the law of His own works. No works of the Father can interrupt the sabbath rest: no works of the Son on earth can break the sabbath law. The 19th and 20th



verses more fully explain what is expressed in these majestic words.

Ver. 18. For this cause therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only broke the sabbath, but also called God his own Father, making himself equal with God. The Jews do not fail to see that the argument rested on the first words, 'My Father.' He who could thus speak, and who justified His works by the works of God, was calling God His own Father in the highest sense which these words can bear, and was claiming equality with God. It has been objected that, though the brief assertion of ver. 17 does really imply all this, it is not probable that so momentous an inference would have been drawn from words so few. But it is sufficient to reply that, whilst John gives to us the exact substance of the words of Jesus and the impression which they made upon the hearers, we have no

reason to suppose that *all* the words spoken are recorded. The meaning which we gather from those that stand written before us probably could not be conveyed by *spoken* words without repetition and enlargement. The thought of the condensation which must have taken place in the record of these discourses of our Lord is that which fully justifies the devout reader's effort to catch every shade of meaning and follow every turn of expression.—The answer Jesus has given does but repel the Jews. We are told what the persecution of ver. 16 meant,—even then they had sought His life, for now they sought *the more* to kill Him. From this point onwards we have the conflict that nothing could reconcile, the enmity of the Jews which would not and could not rest until they had compassed the death of Him who had come to save them.

## CHAPTER V. 19-47.

### *The Discourse of Jesus at the Pool of Bethesda.*

19 **T**HEN answered Jesus<sup>1</sup> and said unto them, Verily, verily,

I say unto you, <sup>a</sup> The Son can do nothing of himself, but <sup>b</sup> what he seeth the Father do: <sup>c</sup> for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.<sup>d</sup> For <sup>e</sup> the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth: and he will shew him greater works than these, that ye may

21 marvel. For <sup>f</sup> as the Father <sup>g</sup> raiseth up the dead, and <sup>h</sup> quickeneth them; <sup>i</sup> so <sup>j</sup> even <sup>k</sup> so the Son quickeneth <sup>l</sup> whom he will. For the Father judgeth no man,<sup>m</sup> but <sup>n</sup> hath committed <sup>o</sup> all judgment unto the Son: That all *men* should <sup>p</sup> honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. <sup>q</sup> He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath <sup>r</sup> sent him.

24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, <sup>s</sup> He that heareth my word, and believeth on <sup>t</sup> him that sent me, <sup>u</sup> hath everlasting <sup>v</sup> life, and <sup>w</sup> shall not come into condemnation; <sup>x</sup> but <sup>y</sup> 'is <sup>z</sup> passed from <sup>aa</sup> death unto <sup>ab</sup> life. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming,<sup>ac</sup> and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear <sup>ad</sup> shall live. For <sup>ae</sup> as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given <sup>af</sup> to the Son <sup>ag</sup> to have life in himself; And hath given <sup>ah</sup> him authority to execute judgment also,<sup>ai</sup> because he is the Son <sup>aj</sup> of man.

<sup>a</sup> Ver. 30, chap. viii. 28, x. 37, xii. 49, xiv. 10.  
<sup>b</sup> Chap. iii. 35, x. 17.

<sup>c</sup> 2 Cor. i. 9.

<sup>d</sup> Rom. iv. 17, viii. 11.

<sup>e</sup> Chap. xi. 25

<sup>f</sup> Ver. 27:

Acts x. 42,

xvii. 31;

Rom. xiv. 10.

<sup>g</sup> See chap. xv. 23.

<sup>h</sup> Chap. viii. 51.

<sup>i</sup> See chap. iii. 15, 36.

<sup>j</sup> Chap. iii. 18.

<sup>k</sup> 1 John iii. 14.

<sup>l</sup> 14.

<sup>m</sup> Chap. i. 4,

vi. 57, xi. 25,

xiv. 6;

1 John i. 1, 9,

v. 11; Rev. i. 18.

<sup>1</sup> Jesus therefore answered <sup>2</sup> can of himself do nothing save <sup>3</sup> doing  
<sup>4</sup> these things the Son also in like manner doeth <sup>5</sup> For even  
<sup>6</sup> and maketh to live <sup>7</sup> omit even <sup>8</sup> also maketh to live  
<sup>9</sup> For moreover the Father judgeth no one <sup>10</sup> given  
<sup>11</sup> That all may <sup>12</sup> omit hath <sup>13</sup> omit on <sup>14</sup> eternal  
<sup>15</sup> and cometh not into judgment <sup>16</sup> hath <sup>17</sup> out of <sup>18</sup> into  
<sup>19</sup> An hour cometh <sup>20</sup> have heard <sup>21</sup> For even  
<sup>22</sup> so gave he <sup>23</sup> Son also <sup>24</sup> And he gave <sup>25</sup> omit also <sup>26</sup> a son

28 Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming,<sup>37</sup> in the which all  
 29 that are in the graves shall hear his voice, <sup>38</sup> And shall come forth; they that have done good,<sup>38</sup> unto the <sup>39</sup> resurrection of life; and <sup>40</sup> they that have done <sup>41</sup> evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.<sup>42</sup>

30 <sup>43</sup> I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: <sup>44</sup> and my judgment is just; because <sup>45</sup> I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.<sup>46</sup>

31 <sup>47</sup> If I bear witness of <sup>48</sup> myself, my witness is not true.  
 32 <sup>49</sup> There <sup>50</sup> is another that beareth witness of <sup>51</sup> me; and I know that <sup>52</sup> the witness which he witnesseth of <sup>53</sup> me is true. <sup>54</sup> Ye sent <sup>55</sup> unto John, and he bare <sup>56</sup> witness unto the truth. But I receive not testimony from man:<sup>57</sup> but <sup>58</sup> these things I say, that ye might <sup>59</sup> be saved. He was a burning and a shining light:<sup>60</sup> and ye were willing <sup>61</sup> for a season to rejoice <sup>62</sup> in his light. But I have greater witness <sup>63</sup> than that of John: for <sup>64</sup> the works which <sup>65</sup> the Father hath given me to <sup>66</sup> finish,<sup>67</sup> the same <sup>68</sup> works that I do, bear witness of <sup>69</sup> me, that the Father hath sent me. <sup>70</sup> And the Father himself,<sup>71</sup> which hath <sup>72</sup> sent me, hath <sup>73</sup> borne witness of <sup>74</sup> me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape.<sup>75</sup> And ye have not <sup>76</sup> his word abiding in you:  
 39 for <sup>77</sup> whom <sup>78</sup> he hath <sup>79</sup> sent, him ye believe not. <sup>80</sup> Search <sup>81</sup> the Scriptures; for <sup>82</sup> in them ye think <sup>83</sup> ye have <sup>84</sup> eternal life: and <sup>85</sup> they are they which testify of me.<sup>86</sup> <sup>87</sup> And ye will not come to me, that ye might <sup>88</sup> have life. <sup>89</sup> I receive not honour from men.<sup>90</sup> But <sup>91</sup> I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you. I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive. <sup>92</sup> How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another,<sup>93</sup> and seek not <sup>94</sup> the honour that cometh from God only?<sup>95</sup> <sup>96</sup> Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is <sup>97</sup> one that accuseth you, <sup>98</sup> even Moses, in whom ye trust.<sup>99</sup> For had <sup>100</sup> ye believed Moses, ye would have be-

<sup>37</sup> Dan. xii. 2;  
<sup>38</sup> Matt. xxv.  
<sup>46</sup>; Acts  
xxiv. 15.

<sup>44</sup> Ver. 19.

<sup>45</sup> Chap. viii.

<sup>46</sup> Matt. xxvi.

<sup>47</sup> 39; chap. iv.

<sup>48</sup> 34, vi. 38.

<sup>49</sup> Comp. chap.

viii. 13, 14.

<sup>50</sup> Ver. 37;

<sup>51</sup> chap. viii. 18.

<sup>52</sup> 1 John v. 6,

<sup>53</sup> Chap. i. 19.

<sup>64</sup> Chap. x. 25,

<sup>65</sup> 38, xv. 24.

<sup>66</sup> Chap. iv. 34.

<sup>70</sup> Ver. 32.

<sup>71</sup> Comp. chap

vi. 27.

<sup>76</sup> 1 John ii. 14.

<sup>80</sup> Chap. vi. 29.

<sup>81</sup> Acts xvii. 11.

<sup>82</sup> Ver. 24.

<sup>87</sup> Ver. 46;

<sup>88</sup> Luke xxiv.

<sup>89</sup> 27; chap. i.

<sup>90</sup> 45; Acts x.

<sup>91</sup> 73.

<sup>92</sup> Chap. i. 11.

<sup>93</sup> See chap.

vii. 18.

<sup>94</sup> Chap. ii. 24.

<sup>92</sup> Chap. xii.

<sup>93</sup> 43.

<sup>94</sup> Rom. ii. 29.

<sup>95</sup> Chap. xvii.

<sup>96</sup> 3.

<sup>37</sup> because an hour cometh      <sup>38</sup> And they that have done good shall go forth  
<sup>39</sup> a      <sup>40</sup> but      <sup>41</sup> committed  
<sup>39</sup> a resurrection of judgment      <sup>42</sup> of him that sent me      <sup>43</sup> concerning  
<sup>44</sup> It      <sup>45</sup> have sent      <sup>46</sup> hath borne  
<sup>47</sup> But not from a man do I receive the witness      <sup>48</sup> howbeit      <sup>49</sup> may  
<sup>50</sup> He was the lamp that burneth and shineth      <sup>51</sup> and ye desired  
<sup>52</sup> exult      <sup>53</sup> But the witness that I have is greater      <sup>54</sup> that  
<sup>55</sup> accomplish      <sup>56</sup> very      <sup>57</sup> concerning  
<sup>58</sup> omit himself      <sup>59</sup> omit hath      <sup>60</sup> he hath  
<sup>61</sup> Never have ye either heard a voice of him or seen a form of him  
<sup>62</sup> because      <sup>63</sup> Ye search      <sup>64</sup> because      <sup>65</sup> ye think that in them  
<sup>66</sup> and it is they which bear witness concerning me      <sup>67</sup> may  
<sup>68</sup> Glory from men I receive not      <sup>69</sup> receiving glory one of another  
<sup>70</sup> and the glory that is from the only God ye seek not  
<sup>71</sup> ye have placed your hope      <sup>72</sup> if

47 lieved<sup>64</sup> me: <sup>65</sup>for he wrote of<sup>66</sup> me. But 'if ye believe not his <sup>67</sup>writings, how shall<sup>68</sup> ye believe my words?

<sup>64</sup> would believe

<sup>65</sup> concerning

<sup>66</sup> will

**CONTENTS.** The performance of the miracle of healing on the sabbath had roused the active opposition of the Jews to Jesus, and that again had led to the great declaration contained in ver. 17, in which Jesus announces His equality with God. This announcement only excites the Jews to greater rage; and Jesus is thus led, according to His custom in this Gospel, to present in still fuller and more forcible terms the truth by which their anger and opposition had been aroused. The discourse may be divided into three subordinate parts—(1) vers. 19-29, where, with a thrice repeated 'Verily, verily' (the progress of the thought is pointed out in the Exposition), Jesus speaks of Himself as the Worker of the Father's works, the Revealer of the Father's glory; (2) ver. 30, a verse at once summing up what has preceded from ver. 19, and introducing the remainder of the discourse; (3) vers. 31-47, where Jesus passes from the 'greater works' that He does to the witness borne to Him by the Father, pointing out at the same time the true nature of the evil principles within the Jews which prevented their receiving that witness.

Ver. 19. **Jesus therefore answered and said unto them.** We have already found Jesus replying to those who did not receive His utterance of a truth by a repeated and more emphatic declaration of the very truth which they rejected (see iii. 5). So it is here. He had been accused of blasphemy in calling God 'His own Father' and making Himself equal with God. He solemnly reiterates His claim, and expresses with greater force the unity of His working with the working of God His Father.—**Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can of himself do nothing save what he seeth the Father doing: for what things soever he doeth, these things the Son also in like manner doeth.** The connection of this verse with the preceding is of itself sufficient to preclude the interpretation which some have given,—that it has reference to the perfect obedience of the Son of man rather than to the essential oneness of the Son of God with the Father. The last words of the verse express the general positive truth that all the Father's works are done by the Son, and done by Him in like manner, while the mystery contained in them is not greater than that which is inherent in every statement relating to the Trinity. Anticipating for a moment what will meet us in later parts of the discourse, and remembering that human words can only be approximations to the truth, we may say that it is the Son's part to make the Father's works take the shape of actual realities among men. The Father's working and the Son's working are thus not two different workings, and they are not a working of the same thing twice. They are related to each other as the ideal to the phenomenal, as the thought to the word. The Father does not work *actually*; He works always *through* the Son. The Son does not work *ideally*; He works always *from* the Father. But God is always working; therefore the Son is always working; and the works of the Father are the works of the Son,—

distinct, yet one and the same. From this positive truth follows the denial which comes earlier in the verse. The Jews had denounced Jesus as a blasphemer, had thought that He was placing Himself in awful opposition to God. This is impossible, for the Son can do nothing of Himself; severance from the Father in action is impossible, how much more contrariety of action! The Son can do nothing of Himself,—can indeed do nothing save what He seeth the Father doing. (The remarks on 'save' made above, see chap. iii. 13, are exactly applicable here. See also chap. xv. 4, which closely resembles this verse in mode of expression.) The subordination of the Son, which subsists together with perfect unity, is expressed in the former half of the verse by the 'seeing,' in the latter by the order of the clauses. The whole verse is a translation of the truth expressed in the Prologue (vers. 1, 18).

Ver. 20. **For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth.** The relation of the Son's acts to those of the Father has been connected with the figure of 'seeing': the converse is here presented, as 'showing.' The Father 'showeth' what Himself doeth; the Son 'seeth.' The principle of the relation between the Father and the Son, out of which this communion springs, is 'love,'—an eternal and continuous and infinite love, the source of an eternal and continuous and perfect communion. The same English words have occurred before, in chap. iii. 35; but the original expression is not the same. We shall have occasion in several passages to notice the two Greek words in question, which, as a rule, must be rendered by the same English word, 'love.' Starting from the use of the words between man and man, we may say that the one (*φιλιω*) denotes rather the tender emotional affection, that the other (*ἀγαπάω*) is never dissociated from intellectual preference, esteem, choice. The one term is not necessarily stronger than the other. The latter may be more exalted, as implying the result of intelligence and knowledge; the former may be more expressive, as implying a closer bond and a warmer feeling. The first word is most in place when the two who are united by love stand more nearly on the same level, the second is commonly used when there is disparity. The former occurs thirteen times only in this Gospel; once of the Father's love towards the Son (here), and once of His consequent love to those who love the Son (xvi. 27); three times of the love of Jesus towards His disciples, and six times of their love to Him; the other two passages are xii. 25 ('he that loveth his life') and xv. 19 ('the world would love its own'). It does not occur in John's Epistles, and twice only in the Apocalypse (iii. 19, xii. 15). On the other hand, the latter word occurs no fewer than thirty-seven times in John's Gospel and thirty times in his Epistles. In the Gospel it is used seven times of the love between the Father and the Son; once of the love of God to the world (iii. 16), and three times of the Father's love to those who are Christ's; eleven times of the love of Jesus towards His own,

nine times of their love towards Him, and four times of the mutual love of the disciples. In the remaining passages (iii. 19 and xii. 43) it denotes preference or choice. The fitness of the employment of the two words is very clear in almost all these instances. The first class is that with which we are now concerned, both words being used to denote the love existing between the Father and the Son. The particular passages will be noticed as they occur, but the verse before us and chap. iii. 35 are sufficient to show clearly the general principle ruling this whole class. Here, as the context brings into relief the essential relation between the Son and the Father, that word is chosen which most befits the unity of their Being. In iii. 35, again, the context fixes our attention on Him whom God hath 'sent : ' not the essence but the work of the Son is the leading thought,—not the Word 'in the beginning with God,' but the Only-begotten Son given that the world might be saved : the other word, therefore, is there used.—**And he will shew him greater works than these.** The word 'showeth' in the first part of the verse includes all time : here the future tense is used, not as pointing to a change in the relation of the Son to the Father, as if the 'showing' and the 'seeing' would in the future grow in completeness and intensity, but only because the eternal purpose of the Father for mankind is fulfilled in time, and because the Saviour is looking at successive stages of His work, as developed in human history.—The 'greater works' must not be understood to mean simply greater acts, more wonderful miracles, all that we commonly understand by the miracles of Jesus being rather comprehended under the word 'these.' Further, our Lord does not say 'greater works than this' miracle, but greater works than 'these : ' and lastly, to compare one of the Saviour's miraculous deeds with another, to divide them into greater and less, is altogether foreign to the spirit of the Gospels. The key to the meaning of the 'greater works' is given by the following verses ; they include the raising of the dead, the giving of life, the judgment.—**That ye may marvel.** The design of these greater works, of this higher and more complete manifestation of Jesus, is 'that ye may marvel.' 'Ye,' as throughout this discourse, is an address to those who opposed Him, who 'would not come' to Him, who refused to believe His words. The meaning of 'marvel,' therefore, does not differ from that which we observed in chap. iii. 7 : it is not the wonder of admiration and faith, but the marvelling of astonishment and awe.

Ver. 21. **For even as the Father raiseth up the dead and maketh to live, so the Son also maketh to live whom he will.** This verse begins the explanation of the 'greater works' which the Father 'will show' unto the Son. In speaking of these, however, the present not the future tense is used, for some of them are even now present in their beginnings, though future in their complete manifestation. The first example of these works of the Father, which 'the Son also doeth in like manner,' is raising up the dead and making to live. Are the words to be understood in their ordinary sense, or are they figurative ? This question can only be answered from the context. On one side ver. 25 is decisive, death being there used of a spiritual state, and not with a physical reference only. On the other hand, ver. 28 unquestionably speaks of the raising of the dead out of

their graves. As, therefore, the verses which follow ver. 21 certainly contain an expansion and exposition of the first words of the discourse (vers. 17, 19-21), the general terms of ver. 21 must be employed in their widest sense, including both a physical and a spiritual resurrection and gift of life. This is the more natural, as the miracle of healing has been the fountain of the discourse, and we have seen that in such miracles of our Lord the physical and spiritual worlds are in a remarkable way brought together.—The work spoken of is divided into two parts, the raising and the giving of life. The former word 'raising' is that used in ver. 8 ('Rise'), and is the first part of the command which *then* gave life. It is the word rendered 'awake' in Eph. v. 14, a passage which the verse before us at once recalls. Whether used literally or in reference to a spiritual resurrection, it denotes the first step in the process of 'making to live.' Either word might stand by itself to indicate the work : neither in 2 Cor. i. 9, 'God which raiseth the dead,' nor in Rom. iv. 17, 'God who maketh the dead to live,' is an imperfect act described. But the description is more vivid here, as we see first the transition and then the completed gift. In the language of this Gospel, 'life' has so deep a significance that 'maketh to live' must not be limited to the *initial* 'quickening,'—it is the *whole* communication of the fulness of life. If this view be correct, we can find no difficulty in the omission of the word 'raiseth' in the second half of the verse. Once mentioned, it presents the work of giving life so vividly, that afterwards the one word 'maketh-to-live' is sufficient to bear all the meaning. So in ver. 8 and ver. 11. The command to the sick man had been, 'Rise and . . . walk : ' when the result is described and the command related by him who has been healed, nothing is said of the *arising*, for it is included in the gift of life. God 'maketh alive' (Deut. xxxii. 39 ; 1 Sam. ii. 6) : 'God hath given to us eternal life' (1 John v. 11). However understood, whether physically or spiritually, this is the work of the Father ; both in the physical and in the spiritual sense, it is also, we now learn, the work of the Son. In one respect the later part of the verse is not less but more detailed than the earlier. No one can doubt that 'whom He will' lies implicitly in the first words, but the thought is expressed in regard to the Son only ; and the best illustration of it as applied to Him is given by the narrative itself. Amongst the crowd of sick Jesus chose out one especially wretched and consciously helpless, and bestowed on him the free gift of life. So (Matt. xi. 25) the wise and prudent are passed by, and babes are the objects of the Father's merciful will. The Son's will is the manifestation of the Father's purpose. There is no suggestion of an absolute decree. The cure of the sick man was to a certain extent dependent on his own will : 'Hast thou a will to be made whole?' (ver. 6). The same will to be quickened is necessary to all to whom the will to quicken on the part of the Son extends. What is the source of the will in them is a question not raised : enough that the light appears, and they are attracted to the light and open their hearts to receive it.

Ver. 22. **For moreover the Father judgeth no one, but hath given all judgment unto the Son.** This verse must be taken in connection with the 19th, 'The Son can of Himself do

nothing save what He seeth the Father doing.' By thus connecting the two verses, it becomes plain that our Lord does not assert that judgment is not in a certain sense exercised by the Father, but that the Father has not reserved judgment to Himself,—that with all other things, it too is given unto the Son. The Father sheweth the Son all things that Himself doeth: from this complete manifestation nothing is excepted,—not even that final arbitrament which is the prerogative of the Supreme. Hence there is no contradiction between this verse and ver. 30 below, where Jesus says, 'I can of mine own self do nothing; as I hear, I judge;' nor will viii. 50 present any difficulty. By 'judgment,' as in chap. iii. 17, 18, 19, we must certainly understand a judgment that issues in condemnation: the parallelism between iii. 18, 'He that believeth in Him is not judged,' and ver. 24, 'He that heareth my word and believeth Him that sent me hath eternal life, and cometh not into judgment,' is remarkably close. All judgment future and present, the final award with all that foreshadows it, the Father hath given, by a bestowal which can never be revoked, unto the Son. The connection between the 22d and the 21st verses is now plain. The Son maketh to live whom He will; but there are some on whom He does not bestow life (compare ver. 40); them therefore He judges, He condemns,—for not even is this Divine prerogative withholden from Him; nay, all judgment hath been given unto the Son.

Ver. 23. **That all may honour the Son even as they honour the Father.** These words express the purpose of the Father in giving all judgment to the Son. They remind us of the closing words of ver. 20, which also express His purpose, but there is a significant difference between the two verses. There we read 'that ye may marvel,' here 'that *all* may honour:' there it is the confusion and amazement of foes, here it is the honour rendered by all whether foes or friends. It is true, indeed, that the 'judgment' of ver. 22 implies condemnation, and that, by consequence, this verse might seem to relate to foes only and not obedient subjects in the kingdom of God. But the 'all' is rightly introduced, for when judgment has compelled the honour of unwilling adoration, much more may it be expected that willing hearts will see the unity of the Father and the Son, and will honour the Son even as they honour the Father.—**He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father which sent him.** It was in their zeal for the honour of the Father, as they supposed, that the Jews refused to honour Him who was God's Son. But so truly one are the Father and the Son, that all who dishonour the Son dishonour the Father. The Father orders all things as He does that He whom He sent into the world may receive equal honour with Himself; and all who refuse honour to the Son resist the Father's purpose. Similar words are found in one of the earlier Gospels (Luke x. 16), yet no teaching is more characteristic of the fourth.

Ver. 24. **Verily, verily, I say unto you.** The second 'Verily, verily,' introducing the second step in the argument.—**He that heareth my word, and believeth Him that sent me, hath eternal life, and cometh not into judgment, but hath passed out of death into life.** This verse has a close connection with the last, the words 'Him that sent me' taking up the similar words in

ver. 23; and those who by hearing Christ's words give honour to the Father being set over against those who were there spoken of as dishonouring the Father. But the verse has also a very important connection with the three preceding verses. They have stated the work of the Son *as it has been given Him by the Father*; this states the same work *in its effect upon believers*. The comparison of the terms employed in the several verses is very instructive, and the *advance* from a principle asserted of the Son to the same principle viewed in its application to men is most perceptible. The Son maketh to live the dead, even those whom He will (ver. 21): he that heareth His word hath eternal life, and hath passed out of his state of death into life (ver. 24). All judgment is given unto the Son (ver. 22): into this judgment he that believeth does not come (ver. 24). There is special significance in the words 'believeth Him that sent me:' our Lord does not say 'believeth in Him,' for that which He has in view is the acceptance of God's testimony concerning the Son (1 John v. 10). Such hearing and believing imply the full acceptance of Christ, and thus lead directly to that 'believing in the Son' which (chap. iii. 36) gives the present possession of eternal life. The believer has passed into a state to which judgment does not apply; he has received into himself that word which (chap. xii. 48) will at the last day judge all who reject it. Believing in Christ, he has life in Him, and to all that are in Christ Jesus there is no condemnation (Rom. viii. 1).

Ver. 25. **Verily, verily, I say unto you.** The third 'Verily, verily,' introducing the third step in the argument.—**An hour cometh, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that have heard shall live.** What was said of ver. 24 applies here also; for this verse has a direct connection with that which precedes it ('heareth my word' rises into 'shall hear the voice of the Son of God'); and yet a still more important link unites it with the opening words of the discourse, especially with ver. 20, 'He will show Him greater works.' In the 21st and 22d verses, these works are looked at in their own nature as done by the Son; in the 24th verse, they are looked at in their effect on the believer. Now, the 'will show' is brought into prominence, for it is of the *historical* fulfilment of those words that the verse before us speaks. 'An hour cometh' when the Son's power to give life to the dead (ver. 21) shall be manifested. Of the two spheres in which this power is exercised this verse has in view one only; the 'dead' are those who are spiritually dead. In regard to these alone could it be said that the hour has already begun ('an hour cometh, and now is'), or would the limitation in the last words be in place, '*they that have heard shall live.*' The general meaning therefore is the same as that of the last verse; but, as it is to 'the dead' that the Son speaks, we here read of 'the voice' and not 'the word.' In saying 'the voice of the Son of God,' Jesus recalls to our thought all the majesty of His first words (vers. 11, 17, 19).

Ver. 26. **For even as the Father hath life in himself; so gave he to the Son also to have life in himself.** The dead shall hear the voice of the Son and live, for the Son hath life and can impart life. This is the connection between verses 25 and 26. The Father who is the primal fountain

of life gave to the Son to have life in Himself. As in verses 19, 20, 21, that which belongs to the Father and that which belongs to the Son are designated by the same words, while the subordination expressed in verses 19, 20, by the figurative words 'showing' and 'seeing,' is here (as in ver. 22) expressed by the word 'gave.' It is therefore the essential nature of the Son that is spoken of, and not His work in redemption.—'To have life in Himself' is the loftiest expression that can be used: the unchangeable possession of life exactly similar and parallel to that of the Father, such possession as enables Him to be the Giver of life to others, belongs to the Son.

Ver. 27. **And he gave him authority to execute judgment, because he is a son of man.** The Son 'maketh to live,' but He maketh to live 'whom He will' (ver. 21), or (as we read in ver. 25), He giveth life to those who have heard His voice, and not to all. Where, then, He is not the Giver of life, He is necessarily the Judge. The one thought involves the other, both in verses 21, 22, and here. The Father who gave to the Son the possession of life gave Him judgment also. This we read in the 22d verse, but the truth now wears a new form; for, although the word 'gave' is repeated in ver. 27, it is in relation to a gift and a sphere altogether different from those of which the 26th verse speaks. *There* the essential attributes of the Son are before us, including the prerogatives of the Word made flesh: *here* we read of a gift which belongs to time and not eternity, a gift which the Son receives 'because He is a son of man.' The former verses that speak of giving life and of judging (21, 22) may have an extent of application of which we know nothing; this verse relates to the judgment of *men* by One who is very man. Such is the force of the words 'a son of man.' In every other passage of this Gospel it is 'the Son of man' of whom we read: here only, and in Rev. i. 13, xiv. 14, is the definite article wanting. No expression brings out so strongly the possession of actual human nature, and for this purpose it is employed. God's will is to judge the world by 'a man whom He ordained' (Acts xvii. 31); and the verse before us, though comprehending much more than the last judgment, seems, as may be inferred from the peculiarity of the expression 'execute' or 'perform judgment' (literally 'do judgment'), and from the presence of this thought in the immediate context (vers. 28, 29), to look especially towards the final scene. But the judgment is one that issues in condemnation, and it is the Father's will that 'a son of man' shall pronounce the sentence, as one who has taken on Himself human nature in all its reality and completeness, in all its faculties, affections, and feelings. Because He has done so, He is fitted to be a Judge of men, and to draw from the consciences of the guilty an acknowledgment of the righteousness of their doom. As the Son of God having life in Himself, He gives life, and those who are united to Him by faith have possession of a life that is divine. But as a son of man He judges; as One who has been in the same position with those standing at His bar, as One who has fought the same battle and endured the same trials as they. Thus they behold in their Judge One who entirely knows them; His sentence finds an echo in their heart; and they are speechless. Thus it is that judgment becomes really judgment, and not merely 'he infliction of punishment by resistless power.'

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Ver. 28. **Marvel not at this.** Jesus has been speaking of works at which they may well marvel (ver. 20); but great as these may be, there is yet a greater.—**Because an hour cometh, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice.** That the future alone is spoken of is clear from the omission of the words 'and now is' found in ver. 25. The resurrection is not spiritual and figurative, for the words are 'all that are in the graves,' not 'all that have heard,'—'shall go forth, not 'shall live.' The consummation of the work of Jesus is the general resurrection both of the righteous and the wicked. Now all shall hear His voice, to which before (ver. 25) some only had given heed. All shall go forth, but not all to a resurrection of life.

Ver. 29. **And they that have done good shall go forth unto a resurrection of life; but they that have committed evil unto a resurrection of judgment.** Those who have committed evil, whose deeds have not been the abiding fruit and work of the truth, but merely the repeated manifestation of evil in its vanity and worthlessness (see iii. 20), shall go forth to a resurrection to which belongs abiding judgment. And these alone come into judgment (compare ver. 24). As in iii. 18 it is said that 'he that believeth in Him is not judged,' so here, 'they that have done good shall go forth unto a resurrection of life.' The difference between the two passages is, that in the one the faith is named; in the other, the works which are the expression of the life that follows faith, the abiding fruit of faith. It will be observed that the expressions 'resurrection of life' and 'resurrection of judgment' denote *states*, not *acts*, of resurrection. No general judgment, therefore, is here mentioned: all that is spoken of is a general *resurrection*, on the part of some to a continuing life, of others to a continuing judgment.

Ver. 30. **I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just.** This verse is the dividing line of the discourse, belonging at once to both parts, summing up (to a certain extent) what has gone before, leading on to the new subject which occupies the remainder of the chapter. The last word spoken was 'judgment.' Jesus now returns to it, and it is not strange that He should do so. He is speaking in the presence of the Jews, His determined foes, who refuse life, whom He judges and cannot but judge. Hence this lingering on judgment, and the recurrence to the first thought of the discourse (ver. 19), so as to show that this judgment is not of Himself, but belongs both to the Father and to the Son.—The figure of ver. 19 is changed. There 'seeing' was the word chosen, as most in harmony with the general thought of works done; here it is of judging that Jesus speaks, and hence the same thought of communion with the Father is best expressed by 'hearing.' One characteristic of this verse is so marked as of itself to prove that the verse is closely related to those which follow. From the beginning of the discourse (ver. 19) Jesus has spoken of the Father and the Son. Now He directly fixes the eyes of His hearers upon Himself ('I can,' 'I hear,' 'I judge'); and this mode of speech is retained to the very end of the chapter.—**Because I seek not mine own will, but the will of him that sent me.** That His works have not been and cannot be against the authority and will of God, Jesus has shown by pointing out their essential unity with those of the

Father (ver. 19). That the judgment He must pass is just, He has shown by the same proof,—‘as I hear I judge.’ But a second proof is now given, or rather (perhaps) a second aspect of the same truth is brought into relief, that thus His words of rebuke and warning may be more effectually addressed to the Jews. His action is never separate from that of the Father,—there can be no variance: His will is ever the will of His Father,—there can be no self-seeking. It was because the opposite spirit dwelt and reigned in the Jews that they were rejecting Him, and bringing judgment on themselves.—The transition to the first person, ‘I,’ my,’ suggests an objection that would arise in the minds of the Jews. This is met in the verse that follows.

Ver. 31. **If I bear witness concerning myself, my witness is not true.** The word ‘I’ is emphatic,—‘if it is I that bear witness.’ The words plainly mean ‘I and I alone,’ for no one is discredited because he testifies to himself, although he is not credited if *no other* witness appears on his behalf. The Jews may have understood Jesus to mean: If I have no other witness to testify concerning me, my testimony cannot claim to be received. But there is more in His words. In the consciousness of oneness with the Father, He would say that if it were possible that His own witness should stand alone, unaccompanied by that of the Father, it would be self-convicted, would not be true: He, in making the assertion, would be false, for He is one with the Father, and His statement, as that of one who was false, would be false also. He must therefore show that the witness He bore to Himself was really borne to Him by the Father: the Father’s witness even the Jews will acknowledge to be true. To this, therefore, He proceeds.

Ver. 32. **It is another that beareth witness concerning me.** Not ‘There is another,’ as if He would merely cite an additional witness. He would lay the *whole* stress of the witnessing upon this ‘other witness.’ This witness is the Father,—not John the Baptist, who is mentioned in the next verse only that it may be shown that his testimony is *not* that on which Jesus relies.—**And I know that the witness which he witnesseth concerning me is true.** These words are not said in attestation of the Father’s truth, a point admitted by all: they are the utterance of the Son’s profound consciousness of His own dignity and union with the Father.

Ver. 33. **Ye have sent unto John, and he hath borne witness unto the truth.** As if He said: Had I not this all-sufficient witness,—were it possible for me to appeal to any human witness, I might rest on your own act. Ye yourselves have made appeal to John, and he hath borne witness to the truth (chap. i. 19-27). Your mission and his answer are unalterable and abiding facts, which press upon you still and cannot be set aside. What he attested is the truth. Jesus does not say ‘hath borne witness to me,’ perhaps because that to which John bore witness was only a revelation from God (compare chap. i. 34), a declaration of the truth which he had received from God; perhaps because the whole lesson of this passage is that there is only *one* real witness to Jesus, even the Father speaking in the Son and drawing out the answer of the heart to Him.

Ver. 34. **But not from a man do I receive the witness.** Great as was the witness of this greatest

of prophets, yet John was only a man, and his witness therefore is not the real testimony to Jesus; it is a higher which is given Him, and which He receives (comp. ver. 36). Hence the definite article before ‘witness.’—**Howbeit these things I say that ye may be saved.** Insufficient as was John’s testimony for the production of faith in its deepest and truest sense, yet Jesus had referred to it, recognising its value as part of the Divine arrangements for leading men to Himself. It ought to have brought them to Jesus: and then, as they listened to His own word, the true and complete witness would have been given. The following words set forth more fully the true position of the Baptist, in his value and in his imperfection.

Ver. 35. **He was the lamp that burneth and shineth.** John’s great work had been to bear witness of Jesus, to point to Him. By a sudden transition this is expressed very beautifully in a figure. As the Psalmist said of God’s word that it was a lamp unto his feet and a light unto his path (Ps. cxix. 105), showing him the right path, preserving his feet from wandering, so does Jesus represent John’s mission here. The lamp has been supplied with oil and has been lighted for a special purpose; it is not self-luminous, shining because it is its nature to give light. The lamp too burns as it shines; its light is transitory, and may well be so, because in proportion as its purpose is accomplished may the light diminish: when its end is answered, the lamp may be extinguished (comp. iii. 30).—**And ye desired for a season to exult in his light.** Alas! for them the lamp failed to fulfil its purpose. Instead of learning the way to Jesus by its means, they thought only of the light itself. No doubt this light was beautiful and attractive, but it had been designed only to guide to Him who would prove ‘the true light’ unto all that followed Him (chap. i. 9, viii. 12). The Jews are evidently censured, but not (as some maintain) because they had exulted instead of mourning. There had been no call to mourning. The very exhortation to repentance, to prepare for the coming of Him for whom Israel had long waited, contained in it ‘glad tidings of great joy.’ The transient acceptance of John himself, instead of the acceptance of his message in its true and permanent significance, is the fault for which the Jews are here condemned.

Ver. 36. **But the witness that I have is greater than that of John.** Our Lord does not say ‘I have greater witness than that of John,’ as if He was about to specify *additional* testimony of greater weight than the Baptist’s. No, that testimony to the truth was good, was useful (vers. 33, 34), but ‘the witness’ which He has—the *only* witness to which He appeals—belongs altogether to another order, not human, but Divine. Other witness may prepare the heart, external testimony may point the way, but there is only one evidence offered by Jesus Himself.—**For the works that the Father hath given me to accomplish, the very works that I do, bear witness concerning me, that the Father hath sent me.** The evidence is works that the Father hath given Him to accomplish; and these works are His evidence, not as external evidence merely, but because, as expressive of the Father in Him, they appeal to that inner light in men which ought to have led men to recognise the Father in the Son. Of these ‘works’ miracles are one part, but not the whole. In two

other passages our Lord uses similar language to this, speaking of the 'accomplishment' of the work of the Father (chap. iv. 34) or of the work which the Father hath given Him to do (chap. xvii. 4); and in both the work is more than miracles. True, we read in these of 'the work,' not 'the works,' but the difference is not essential: the many works are the many portions of the one work. Nor need we go beyond this discourse itself to see that the very widest meaning must be assigned to 'works.' The keynote is struck by ver. 17, which speaks of the 'working' of the Father and the Son; and in ver. 20 we read of the 'greater works' which the Father will show unto the Son. The 'works' then here denote all that has been referred to in earlier verses (20-30), whether present or future, the works of quickening, raising, judging, all that the Son does and will do until the purpose of the Father is accomplished and the redemptive work complete. These works, being manifestations of His own nature, are essentially different from all external testimony whatever.—Such as they are, they have been 'given' Him by the Father to accomplish: they are described not as a charge but as a *gift* (as in verses 22, 26, 27): and they are the very works which He is now doing and habitually does. Special significance attaches to these added words, 'the very works that I do,' for they show that the witness given by the Father to the Son is given in 'works,' now presented to their view. Every word and every deed of Jesus is, as a work, bearing testimony to the truth that the Father hath sent Him; for, where the heart of the beholder is prepared, every work reveals the presence of the Father, and is manifestly a work of God.

Ver. 37. **And the Father which sent me, he hath borne witness concerning me.** As if Jesus said: And thus, in the abiding gift of the 'works,' it is the Father that sent me that hath borne witness of me.—'Hath borne witness' corresponds with 'hath given'; each points to the continued possession of a gift bestowed, the Father's abiding presence with Him whom He 'sent' and 'sealed' (chap. vi. 27). Hence we must not suppose that a *new* witness of the Father—'direct' (as some say), in contrast with the 'mediate' testimony of the works—is here intended. If the 'works' include the whole manifestation of the Son, the whole of the tokens of the Father's presence in Him and with Him, they are no 'mediate' testimony; no testimony can be more direct.—**Never have ye either heard a voice of him or seen a form of him.** The Father has borne witness, but they have not known His presence. In the words of Jesus He has spoken, and the ear not closed through wilfulness and unbelief would have recognised the voice of God. In the actions and the whole life of Jesus He has manifested Himself, and the spiritual eye, the man 'pure in heart,' would have 'seen God.' It had been otherwise with 'the Jews.' Whilst our Lord had been working in their midst they had heard no voice of the Father, they had seen no form of Him. This was a proof that they had never received in their hearts God's revelation of Himself. Had they done so, had they (to use our Lord's figurative language,—no doubt suggested by the thought of the words which He had spoken and the miracles which He had shown to them) ever been acquainted with the Father's voice, they would have recognised it when Jesus spoke: had the eyes of

their understanding ever been enlightened so as to see God, they would have seen the Father manifested in their very presence in His Son. What is in these two clauses couched in figurative terms the next clause expresses clearly.

Ver. 38. **And ye have not his word abiding in you; because whom he sent, him ye believe not.** 'Word' here must not be understood as directly signifying the Scriptures of the Old Testament: it is rather the substance of God's whole revelation of Himself, however and wherever made. This revelation received into a believing heart becomes God's word in the man, and to this word answers The Word, in whom God has perfectly revealed Himself (compare Heb. i. 1, 2). By all previous teaching concerning Himself God has prepared the way for man's reception of His Son. He who did not recognise the Son as the Sent of God, showed by this very sign that the preparatory work had not been effected in him,—that he had not God's word abiding in his heart. So in the next chapter Jesus teaches that 'every one that hath heard from the Father, and hath learned, cometh unto Him' (chap. vi. 45). The refusal therefore of the Jews to believe Him, that is, to accept His claims, is of itself a proof that they have had no spiritual aptitude for discerning the presence and the revelation of God. It will be seen that, as in the first clause of ver. 37 we cannot accept the view that a new witness is introduced, different from the works, so here we cannot believe that the 'voice,' 'form,' and 'word' are to be limited to the manifestation of God in the Scriptures of the Old Testament. No doubt this is the most prominent and important part of our Lord's meaning, but we must not exclude God's revelation of Himself in providence and in the heart of man, for in all things He had pointed to His Son.

It should be mentioned that some have supposed the clause 'never have ye heard a voice of Him' to refer to the voice of God at the Baptism of our Lord. But such an interpretation is surely impossible. The tone of the two verses here is one of reproach; but that voice was not intended for the ears of the Jews, and their failure to hear it was no matter of rebuke. This explanation, too, would not diminish but increase the difficulty of the words 'or seen a form of Him,' words startling to every Israelite (compare Deut. iv. 12), and, we believe, only to be accounted for when regarded as closely connected with and suggested by the words and deeds of Jesus.

Ver. 39. **Ye search the Scriptures.** The link connecting this verse with the last is the mention of God's 'word.' We have seen that our Lord had referred in a marked though not an exclusive manner to the Scriptures. To the Jews indeed it might seem that He intended to speak of these alone; and that He should deny Jews the glory which they esteemed most highly, by declaring that they had not God's 'word' abiding in them, would arouse their wonder and their wrath. Now, therefore, Jesus allows them the praise that was their due, but shows also that the very possession of which they boasted had been so used by them as to increase their condemnation.—**Because ye think that in them ye have eternal life: and it is they which bear witness concerning me.** Ver. 40. **And ye will not come to me, that ye may have life.** The Jews did search the sacred writings,—to do so was their honour and their



pride. Their own belief was that in possessing them they possessed eternal life; as one of their greatest teachers said, 'He who has gotten to himself words of the Law has gotten to himself the life of the world to come.' But these very Scriptures were the writings that bore witness concerning Jesus (see the note on ver. 38). Had they entered into their spirit, they would have joyfully welcomed Him; yet they refused to come (it was not their will to come,—see ver. 6) to Him for life. Such is the general meaning of the verses. The Jews had used the witness of the Scriptures as they had dealt with that given by the Baptist (ver. 35). What was designed as a means had been made by them an end; what should have led them to Christ detained them from Him. In a certain sense the Scriptures did contain eternal life, in that they bore witness of Him who was the true bestower of this gift; but as long as men busied themselves with the words of Scripture to the neglect of its purpose, believing that the former would give all they needed and sought, the Scriptures themselves kept them back from life.—It is a little difficult to decide what is the reason for the emphasis which in the original is laid on 'ye' ('ye think that,' etc.). The meaning may be: ye yourselves set such honour on the Scriptures that ye think eternal life is found in them. In this case an argument is founded on their own admissions. Or our Lord may intend to refer to this doctrine respecting the Scripture as *their belief only*, not the truth, not His teaching; ye think that in the Scriptures ye have eternal life, but it is not truly so,—eternal life is given by me alone. The latter meaning seems most in harmony with the context. So understood, the words do indeed rebuke that view of Scripture which rests everything on the letter, and also the inconsistency between the reverence which the Jews paid to the sacred writings and their neglect of the purpose they were designed to serve; but to the Scriptures the highest honour is assigned, for Jesus says, 'it is they which bear witness concerning me.' When thus interpreted in the sense in which it appears necessary to understand them, the words of ver. 39 supply a lesson almost the opposite of that usually drawn from them. While they exalt instead of depreciating the Scriptures, their main object is to warn us against putting them into an undue position, or supposing that they are more than a guide to Him in whom alone life is to be gained (comp. vi. 63). The ordinary rendering of the first word ('Search' for 'Ye search') seems altogether inconsistent with the course of thought in these verses.

Ver. 41. **Glory from men I receive not.** The last nine verses have been an expansion of ver. 31; this verse goes back to the 30th, in which Jesus first contrasts His spirit with theirs, His devotion to the Father's will with their self-seeking. The rest of the chapter is a development of this thought. Yet there is no abrupt break at ver. 40. Jesus has been speaking of the refusal of the Jews to 'believe' Him and 'come to' Him as the sufficient and certain evidence of the evil of their hearts. But in so speaking He is not aiming at His own honour, or seeking fame from men. In every claim for Himself He seeks His Father's glory; and the possession of that spirit is the test of the truth and righteousness which are well-pleasing to the Father: see chap. vii. 18, xii. 43.

Ver. 42. **But I know you, that ye have not the**

**love of God in you.** I know,—that is, I have discerned you, I have read your hearts. Love to God is the foundation of the spirit of self-sacrifice, through which a man seeks not his own but the Father's will. When love to God rules, therefore, the guiding principle is not the desire after glory from men. The Jews whom our Lord was addressing believed themselves zealous for God; but in the very service which they offered Him they were guilty of self-seeking. They valued themselves on what they presented to Him, and yet they presented not that which most of all He sought,—the love in which self is lost. What striking words are those of this verse to address to men who spent their days in searching the Scriptures and in honouring the divinely-appointed institutions of the Law! Their error was that they had not entered into the spirit of these things, had not seen why God had given them, had not therefore understood that glorious righteousness of God in the presence of which man feels himself to be nothing. They had thought that to God these things were an object in themselves. They had brought God down to the level of caring for that in caring for which as his highest good a man feels himself exalted and glorified.

Ver. 43. **I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not.** Referring everything to His Father's power and presence, in everything doing His Father's will and not His own, at all times seeking His Father's glory, Jesus came 'in His Father's name.' Because that was His spirit, they did not receive Him.—**If another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive.** So far has self-seeking gone with them, that they can understand no other course of action than that which is animated by this principle. If a man come in the opposite spirit to that displayed by Jesus,—setting forth himself alone, seeking his own ends, and guided by no will but his own, though all under the guise of promoting the glory of God,—such a man they will be able to understand. They will sympathize with his motives, will even enthusiastically embrace his cause. The other course they cannot comprehend; so far as they do understand it, it is a constant reproach to them. This is a terrible description of those who were then the rulers of 'God's people Israel:' but, alas! the words apply with perfect fitness to the spirit which in every age of the history of Christ's Church has contended against God whilst professing to do Him service; which in every age has tried to stop the progress of truth,—sometimes without, at other times within, the Church,—as truth has striven to pierce through forms that, once good, have with the course of time stiffened into the rigidity of death. Nothing can save from that spirit but the higher and nobler spirit breathing in the words, 'glory from man I receive not.'

Ver. 44. **How can ye believe, receiving glory one of another?** As in the preceding verses, the word *receive* is to be understood as implying a desire and a 'seeking' on their part. Such love of honour from men is altogether inconsistent with the 'believing' of which our Lord speaks. He is not referring to a merely intellectual act, but to an act which is also moral,—not to believing an assertion, but to believing in Him. Where there is self-seeking there can be no true faith.—**And the glory that is from the only God ye seek not.** They who thus sought glory from men sought not glory from 'the only God.' The Jews were the

champions of the doctrine of the unity of God, and, in the very pursuits and aims which our Lord condemns, persuaded themselves that they sought the glory of God and merited reward. But with such aims it was impossible to please Him, and thus they missed the recompense which comes from 'the only God,' who is the 'only' dispenser of true glory.

Ver. 45. Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father: there is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye have placed your hope. These words do not diminish, but increase the severity of our Lord's condemning words. Their objects of trust have been successively taken away. They have the Scriptures, but they have so used them as to miss their whole design; they are rejecting Him of whom they witness, and are offering to God a labour and a zeal which have no value in His sight. The chief tenet in their faith is that 'God is one' (Deut. vi. 4; Jas. ii. 19); but, in the absence of the 'love of God' from their hearts, their zeal for orthodox faith has not gained for them the 'glory that is from the only God.' There has been more, however, than misuse and loss. Their very lawgiver Moses, in whom they had set their hope, is already their accuser before God. No further accusation is needed. No more crushing blow could be given to their pride. Moses their accuser before God! Yet it was so. When we refuse to enter into all the

parts of God's plan, the very parts of it for whose sake our refusal is given, and whose honour we imagine we are maintaining, turn round upon us and disown our aid.

Ver. 46. For if ye believed Moses, ye would believe me: for he wrote concerning me. Our Lord, no doubt, refers in part to special predictions (such as that of Deut. xviii. 15, 18); but more especially He refers to the whole revelation contained in the books of Moses, and by parity of reasoning to the whole Old Testament—the Scriptures of ver. 39. In all the revelation given through him Moses wrote concerning Jesus. His great purpose was to prepare the way for the true Prophet and Priest and King of Israel. Christ was 'the end of the law.' Had, therefore, the Jews 'believed Moses,'—that is, accepted his witness in its true character, and entered into its spirit,—they would have been led by that preparatory prophetic teaching to believe the Christ of whom Moses wrote.

Ver. 47. But if ye believe not his writings, how will ye believe my words? If however they did not truly believe the written word, which was constantly in their hands, which was the object of so much reverence, which, as written, could be studied again and again for the removal of every difficulty and the investigation of every claim, then might it well be expected that they would refuse to receive the words which Jesus spoke.

## CHAPTER VI. 1-21.

### *The Feeding of the Five Thousand.*

1 AFTER these things Jesus went over<sup>1</sup> the sea of Galilee,  
2 which is *the sea* of <sup>a</sup>Tiberias. And <sup>b</sup>a great multi-  
tude followed him, because they saw his miracles<sup>2</sup> which he  
3 did on them that were diseased.<sup>3</sup> And Jesus went up into  
4 a <sup>c</sup>mountain, and there he sat with his disciples. <sup>c</sup>And <sup>d</sup>  
5 the passover, a <sup>e</sup>feast of the Jews, was nigh. <sup>d</sup>When  
Jesus then<sup>7</sup> lifted up *his* eyes, and saw a great company  
come<sup>8</sup> unto him, he<sup>9</sup> saith unto <sup>e</sup>Philip, Whence shall we<sup>10</sup>  
6 buy bread, that these may eat? And<sup>11</sup> this he said to  
7 prove<sup>12</sup> him: for he himself knew what he would<sup>13</sup> do. Philip  
answered him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not suffi-  
cient for them, that every one of them<sup>14</sup> may take a little.  
8 One of his disciples, <sup>f</sup>Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith <sup>f</sup>  
9 unto him, There is a lad<sup>15</sup> here, which hath five barley loaves,  
and two small<sup>16</sup> fishes: but <sup>g</sup>what are they among so many?  
10 And Jesus said, Make the men<sup>17</sup> sit down. Now there was  
much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number

<sup>a</sup> Ver. 23;  
chap. xxi. 1.  
<sup>b</sup> Matt. iv. 23,  
24, 25.

<sup>c</sup> Chap. ii. 23.

<sup>d</sup> Matt. xiv.  
14-21;  
Mark vi.  
35-44;  
Luke ix.  
12-17.  
<sup>e</sup> Chap. i. 43.

<sup>f</sup> Chap. i. 40.

<sup>g</sup> 2 Kings iv  
43.

<sup>1</sup> away to the other side of <sup>2</sup> beheld the signs <sup>3</sup> sick <sup>4</sup> the  
<sup>5</sup> Now <sup>6</sup> the <sup>7</sup> Jesus therefore having  
<sup>8</sup> and having seen that a great multitude cometh <sup>9</sup> omit he  
<sup>10</sup> are we to <sup>11</sup> Now <sup>12</sup> proving <sup>13</sup> was about to  
<sup>14</sup> omit of them <sup>15</sup> little lad <sup>16</sup> omit small <sup>17</sup> Jesus said, Make the people

- 11 about five thousand. And Jesus<sup>10</sup> took the loaves; and when  
 he had <sup>11</sup>given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the <sup>12</sup>disciples<sup>13</sup> to them that were set<sup>14</sup> down; and likewise<sup>15</sup> of the  
 12 fishes as much as they would. When<sup>16</sup> they were filled, he  
 said<sup>17</sup> unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments<sup>18</sup> that re-  
 13 main, that nothing be lost. Therefore they gathered *them*  
 together, and filled twelve <sup>19</sup>baskets with the fragments of<sup>20</sup> the five barley loaves, which remained over and above unto  
 them that had eaten.
- 14 Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus  
 did, said,<sup>21</sup> This is of a truth <sup>22</sup>that prophet that should come<sup>23</sup>  
 15 into the world. When<sup>24</sup> Jesus therefore perceived<sup>25</sup> that they  
 would<sup>26</sup> come and take him by force,<sup>27</sup> to make him a<sup>28</sup> king,  
 he<sup>29</sup> departed<sup>30</sup> again <sup>31</sup>into a<sup>32</sup> mountain himself alone.
- 16 <sup>33</sup>And when even was *now* come, his disciples went down  
 17 unto the sea, And entered into a ship,<sup>34</sup> and went<sup>35</sup> over the  
 sea toward <sup>36</sup>Capernaum.<sup>37</sup> And it was now dark,<sup>38</sup> and Jesus  
 18 was not<sup>39</sup> come to them. And the sea arose<sup>40</sup> by reason of a  
 19 great wind that blew. So when they had rowed about five and  
 20 twenty or thirty furlongs, they see<sup>41</sup> Jesus walking on the sea,  
 and drawing nigh unto the ship:<sup>42</sup> and they were afraid. But  
 21 he saith unto them, It is I; be not afraid. Then they willingly  
 received him into the ship:<sup>43</sup> and immediately the ship<sup>44</sup> was  
 at the land whither they went.

<sup>11</sup> Ver. 23.  
 See Matt.  
 xv. 36.

<sup>19</sup> Matt. xiv.  
 20

<sup>22</sup> Deut. xviii.  
 15, 18;  
 chap. i. 21,  
 vii. 40.  
 Comp. Matt.  
 xi. 3; chap.  
 iv. 29, xi. 27.  
<sup>23</sup> Ver. 3.

<sup>33</sup> Matt. xiv.  
 22-33;  
 Mark vi.  
 45-53.  
<sup>36</sup> Chap. ii. 12.

- <sup>16</sup> Jesus therefore  
<sup>20</sup> had sat <sup>21</sup> likewise also  
<sup>24</sup> Gather together the pieces  
<sup>27</sup> When therefore the people saw the sign that he did, they said  
 the prophet that cometh  
<sup>30</sup> were about to  
<sup>34</sup> retired <sup>35</sup> the  
<sup>38</sup> unto Capernaum  
<sup>40</sup> not yet  
<sup>48</sup> They were willing therefore to receive him into the boat
- <sup>19</sup> omit to the disciples, and the disciples  
<sup>22</sup> And when <sup>23</sup> saith  
<sup>25</sup> baskets with pieces from  
<sup>28</sup> omit When <sup>29</sup> perceiving  
<sup>31</sup> and carry him off <sup>32</sup> omit a <sup>33</sup> omit he  
<sup>36</sup> boat <sup>37</sup> were coming  
<sup>39</sup> And darkness had already come on  
<sup>41</sup> was raging <sup>42</sup> behold

**CONTENTS.** The sixth chapter continues the conflict of Jesus with the Jews, under the same point of view as that which we found to be prominent in chap. v. As in that chapter Jesus was the fulfilment of the sabbath, so in this He is the fulfilment of the Passover; He is the true bread, the true substance of our Paschal feast. The section now before us, contained in the first part of the chapter, may be divided into three subordinate parts—(1) vers. 1-13, the miracle of the multiplying of the bread; (2) vers. 14, 15, the effect produced by the miracle upon the Galilean multitude, leading Jesus to withdraw to the other side of the sea; (3) vers. 16-21, the storm and the reassuring of the disciples.

**Ver. 1. After these things.** Like chap. v., this chapter opens with an indefinite note of time, 'after these things.' In the former instance we saw that the interval covered by the expression may have been two or three months; here, if we

take the feast spoken of in chap. v. 1 to have been the feast of Purim, the events of the two chapters v. and vi. were not separated by more than about two or three weeks, for Purim was past and the Passover was drawing near (ver. 4). From the other Evangelists we know that Jesus went into Galilee after the imprisonment of John the Baptist (Matt. iv. 12; Mark i. 14); and also that after the death of the Baptist He withdrew from Galilee (Matt. xiv. 13; Mark vi. 31). In this Gospel we have already met with two visits to Galilee (chap. ii. 1, iv. 3 and 43), and another is implied in the verse before us. Which of these three is the journey spoken of in Matt. iv. 12? Certainly not the first (John ii. 1, 11), for John was not then cast into prison (chap. iii. 24). Probably not the second, for chap. iv. 1 implies that the Baptist was still at that time engaged in active work (see note on iv. 1). It would seem therefore that the visit to which the earlier Evan-

gelsists give so much prominence, which indeed is the commencement of their detailed history of the Saviour's public ministry, took place after the feast to which reference is made in chap. v. 1. It is in complete accordance with this that Jesus in chap. v. 35 uses words which appear to indicate that the Baptist's public work was at an end. If this view be correct, the earlier Evangelists enable us completely to fill up the interval between chaps. v. and vi. Indeed (assuming the feast of chap. v. to be Purim), the chief objection raised against the view we advocate is that the period of three weeks is too short for the events which come in between our Lord's journey to Galilee and the Feeding of the Multitude. Mark for instance relates the one in i. 14 and the other in vi. 30-44. No doubt the first impression made on any reader is that such a series of events must have occupied months rather than weeks; but if the narrative be attentively examined, it will be found that there is no real ground for such an impression. The three Evangelists seem to have been led rather to give a full description of certain parts than an outline of the whole of our Lord's ministry in Galilee. If the days seem crowded with events, the intensity of the living ministry of Jesus does but receive the fuller illustration, and we have the most impressive comment on His own words in this Gospel (iv. 34, ix. 4) and on the closing testimony of the apostle (xxi. 25). Between these chapters, then, must be placed many of the most familiar chapters of the earlier Gospels. To say nothing of the wonderful miracles wrought in Capernaum and in other places on the coast of the sea of Galilee, to this interval belong the appointment of the twelve apostles, the Sermon on the Mount, the Parables of the kingdom of heaven (Matt. xiii.), the death of John the Baptist in the castle of Machærus. But John's omission of all that happened during our Lord's sojourn in Galilee until the point to which this verse relates is in accord with the general structure of his Gospel; and the special reason which led him to relate the particular events of this chapter, and these only, will be noticed as we proceed. Nothing, we may add, can more strikingly illustrate the twofold character of our Lord's teaching, as addressed to 'the Jews' and the doctors of the law on the one hand and to the multitudes of Galilee on the other, than a comparison of the discourse in Jerusalem which we have just considered (chap. v.) with the Sermon and the Parables spoken but a few days later.—**Jesus went away to the other side of the sea of Galilee, which is the sea of Tiberias.** From Luke ix. 10 we learn that the place to which Jesus crossed over was Bethsaida, that is, Bethsaida Julias in Gaulonitis, a place near the north-eastern corner of the lake, to be carefully distinguished from Bethsaida of Galilee, which was on the western shore. It is remarkable that John should give a twofold designation of the sea,—sea of Galilee and (sea) of Tiberias. The latter name, which perhaps was best known by those amongst whom he wrote, is used by him alone, here and in chap. xxi. 1: the former, 'sea of Galilee,' is the name regularly used by Matthew and Mark. In Luke's Gospel the only name is lake of Gennesaret (chap. v. 1).

Ver. 2. **And a great multitude followed him, because they beheld the signs which he did on them that were sick.** The Greek words are very expressive, pointing clearly to repeated miracles

of healing, on account of which crowds followed him continually from place to place. This is the only verse in John's Gospel corresponding with the many passages in the Synoptic Gospels that briefly record a multitude of such works (Matt. iv. 24, viii. 16, ix. 35, xv. 30; Mark vi. 56; Luke ix. 11, etc.); and it refers to that very Galilean ministry to which those records belong. In Judea, as in unbelieving Nazareth (Mark vi. 5), 'He could not do many mighty works.'

Ver. 3. **And Jesus went up into the mountain, and there he sat with his disciples.** He retired for the purpose of rest and prayer, and that he might instruct his disciples,—the twelve who had just returned from their mission (Mark vi. 30). 'The mountain' we must probably understand in a general sense as meaning the high ground near Bethsaida. In this part the eastern hills closely approach the lake.

Ver. 4. **Now the passover, the feast of the Jews, was nigh.** On the words 'of the Jews' see the notes on i. 19, ii. 13. The addition here serves to explain why Jesus did not go up to the Passover. He had been rejected by the Jews at the former Passover (ii. 18): the feast, which had before that time been robbed by them of its sanctity, belonged after their rejection of Him no longer to His Father but 'to the Jews.' But if Jesus did not visit Jerusalem for this festival, why is it mentioned here? It certainly serves a chronological purpose (though it must be remembered that we cannot say *with absolute certainty* that this was the Passover immediately following that of ii. 11); but even in such incidental notices as these John has not his eye only or chiefly on chronology. Some have supposed that it is to account for the crowds which followed Him, and which may have consisted mainly or partly of the Galilean caravan on its way to the holy city to attend the feast. But ver. 2 makes this unlikely, for it gives an entirely different explanation of the concourse. Besides which, ver. 5 seems to connect the notice of the season and the miracle to follow in such a way as to suggest rather an internal than an external relation between them. It is probable, therefore, that the Evangelist by this mention of the Passover intends to show us the light in which the whole narrative should be viewed. The miracle and the discourses alike relate to the true Passover, the reality and substance of that feast which has now, alas! become 'the feast of the Jews.'

Ver. 5. **Jesus therefore having lifted up his eyes, and having seen that a great multitude cometh unto him.** The place in which the multitudes were gathering was a desert plain at the foot of the hills.—**Saith unto Philip, Whence are we to buy bread, that these may eat?** It was as they drew near that Jesus addressed the question to Philip. The other narratives say nothing of it, but all represent the disciples as coming to their Lord when the day began to wane to beg Him to send away the multitudes. Our Lord's question to Philip, then, is entirely independent of the later petition of the twelve. Even were it otherwise, however, and were John referring to the same point of time as the other Evangelists, there would be no ground whatever for asserting that there is any discrepancy between the narratives, for none of them can contain all that passed between the disciples and their Master. Besides this, the eleven may not have heard the words, or

may not have seen their significance if they did hear them.

Ver. 6. Now this he said proving him: for he himself knew what he was about to do. Why Philip was addressed is a question often raised. The mention of the circumstance may be only the graphic touch of an eye-witness, and there may be nothing important in the Master's choice of the disciple whose faith He is to try. Yet it is more likely that some special reason did exist. Philip may have had something to do with making provision for the wants of the company of disciples: this is not inconsistent with chap. xii. 6. Or there may have been something in the character of Philip's mind that led to the special selection of him for trial; and the incident related in xii. 22 has been appealed to as showing a tendency on his part to a caution that might become excessive and obstructive to the development of faith. A more correct explanation may be that, intending to manifest Himself as the fulfilment of what is written in the law, Jesus turns first to one who had confessed Him as the subject of 'the law and the prophets' (i. 45). He would test him, and try whether he had entered into the full meaning of his own confession.

Ver. 7. Philip answered him, Two hundred pennyworth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one may take a little. As the number of the men alone proved to be five thousand, an expenditure of 200 'pence' (i.e. 200 *denarii*) would allow less than a *denarius*, or about eightpence of our money, to twenty-five persons, and that sum would not purchase in ordinary times more than five or six ounces of bread for each. Philip might well say that it was 'not sufficient for them.'

Ver. 8. One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, saith unto him. On the appellation here given to Andrew see on chap. i. 40. Andrew is again associated with Philip in chap. xii. 22.

Ver. 9. There is a little lad here which hath five barley loaves and two fishes: but what are they among so many? John shows Andrew as standing somewhat in advance of Philip, in that he does not hesitate to think that their little store may be set before the multitude, though he is perplexed at his own suggestion. This is in accordance with the fact that in the lists of the apostles Andrew takes precedence of Philip.

Ver. 10. Jesus said, Make the people sit down. 'The people,' a general word, including both men and women, is used here. They are directed to sit down, partly for the sake of order and ease in the distribution of the food, but also because the Lord is preparing to set a feast before them, and they sit down with Him as His guests.—Now there was much grass in the place. So Mark speaks of the 'green grass,'—a minute but interesting coincidence. The circumstance is one that an eye-witness would naturally note, especially after relating the direction given that the multitude should sit down. John alone has given the season of the year (ver. 4); on this day of early spring the grass would be flourishing and abundant.—So the men sat down, in number about five thousand. The 'men' are now singled out for special mention, probably because they, according to the custom of the East, sat down first. We may also suppose that the number of women and children would not be very large.

Ver. 11. Jesus therefore took the loaves: and when he had given thanks he distributed to them that had sat down; likewise also of the fishes as much as they would. Jesus alone is mentioned, but there is no doubt that He employed the agency of His disciples. In Mark vi. 41 we read that Jesus gave the loaves to His disciples to set before the multitude; but, in the very same verse, that the 'two fishes divided He amongst them all'; yet we cannot doubt that the mode of distribution would be the same in both cases. However done, the work of distribution was really His, and the Evangelist would fix our thoughts on Him alone. This miracle, as has often been remarked, is (with the exception of our Lord's resurrection) the only one related by all four Evangelists. The differences in the accounts are very slight. It is curious to note that in all the other narratives of it our Lord is said to have 'blessed' before He brake the loaves, whereas in the two accounts of the feeding of the four thousand He 'gave thanks' before breaking the bread: here, however, giving thanks takes the place of blessing. When the miracle is referred to below (ver. 23), the Lord's 'giving thanks' is brought into prominence. This would seem to show that the word is here used with intentional significance, probably with marked reference to the Paschal meal, at which thanksgiving played so important a part. There is a striking resemblance indeed between the description before us and the accounts of the last supper, especially that given in 1 Cor. xi.

Ver. 12. And when they were filled, he saith unto his disciples, Gather together the pieces that remain, that nothing be lost. The earlier Gospels relate the act of the disciples, but not the command of Jesus. John, everywhere intent on what his Master did and said, preserves for us this word. The design of the command is to bring out the preciousness of the food which Jesus had given,—not to teach a lesson of economy, or to reprove the over-scrupulous calculations of Andrew and Philip. It is usual to understand by 'pieces' the fragments broken by the multitude during their meal; but it is more probable that they were pieces broken by our Lord,—pieces that remained undistributed or unconsumed because of the abundance of the supply.

Ver. 13. Therefore they gathered them together, and filled twelve baskets with pieces from the five barley loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten. The repetition of the words, 'the five barley loaves,' is remarkable; the writer wishes to lay emphasis on the identity of the fragments with the loaves of the original supply. Mark speaks of the collection of the fragments of the fishes (vi. 43); John, intent on the idea to be unfolded, alike in the scene and in the discourse that followed it, passes by this circumstance. The number of baskets was twelve. We can hardly doubt that each Apostle had his own 'basket,' and that each of these was filled. Nor is it fanciful to see in this a token that what was symbolized by the precious bread was destined for each tribe of Israel. In every narrative of this miracle the same word (*cophinus*) is used for basket; in the accounts of the feeding of the four thousand (Matt. xv. 37; Mark viii. 8) the word is entirely different; and where the two miracles are referred to together, each retains the word

that belongs to it; so that in Matt. xvi. 9, 10, and Mark viii. 19, 20, the word 'baskets,' repeated in our translation, answers to different words. John's agreement with the other Evangelists in so minute a point as the use of *cophinus* in connection with this miracle is interesting and important.

Ver. 14. **When therefore the people saw the sign that he did, they said.** 'The people,'—i.e., the people of ver. 10, those who had been fed and satisfied. Are we, however, to understand that they saw the 'wonder,' but saw in it no 'sign,' as it is said by our Lord below, 'Ye follow me not because ye saw signs;' or may we suppose that even to this multitude the miracle was a sign, like the miracles of healing which they had witnessed before? (ver. 2). The latter interpretation is nearer to the words of John, and is more probable. If in any sense the cures were 'signs' to the beholders, the multiplying of the loaves must have been a greater 'sign.' Their own words confirm this, for they receive the miracle as the heaven-appointed token of the mission of Jesus. Still they did not really look beneath the surface; in the depth of meaning which the word has to John, the wonderful work was not apprehended as a 'sign.' Our Lord's design in this chapter is, as we shall see, to remove their ignorance on this very point.—**This is of a truth the prophet that cometh into the world.** To an Israelite a miracle at once suggested the thought of a prophet (Deut. xiii. 1), as the general name for one who had received a Divine mission. But here it is of *the* Prophet that they speak, no doubt referring to the promise of Deut. xviii. 15 (see note on chap. i. 21). The general expectation which lay in the hearts of men at this time clothed itself in different forms of expression, according to the events which drew it forth. Perhaps the miracle of Elisha (2 Kings iv. 43) rose to their thought, or that of Elijah (1 Kings xvii. 14); and the memory of their ancient prophets drew along with it the promise of the Prophet now to come. More probably it was to the miracle of the manna that their minds recurred, and the work of Moses brought to recollection the promise which Moses left behind him for the last days. The words used by the people leave no doubt that here at least the Prophet is identified with the Messiah, whose most frequent designation seems to have been 'He that cometh' (Matt. xi. 3, etc.), or more fully, 'He that cometh into the world' (comp. chap. i. 9).

Ver. 15. **Jesus therefore perceiving that they were about to come and carry him off to make him king, retired again into the mountain himself alone.** The thought of 'Messiah' is the connecting link between the exclamation related in the last verse and the purpose here mentioned. The Messiah is to reign in the royal city: to Jerusalem therefore they would now carry Him by force, and there proclaim Him king. Their words here given are taken up again in chap. xii. 13, when the Galilean multitudes go to meet Him to escort Him in triumph into Jerusalem, crying out, 'Blessed is *He that cometh* in the name of the Lord, *the King of Israel.*' But the hour for a triumphant entry has not yet arrived. Jesus reads their purpose, and frustrates it by retiring again to 'the mountain' (ver. 3), from which He came down to teach the multitudes and to heal their sick (Luke ix. 11). The first two Evangelists

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tell us that He retired into the mountain 'to pray;' but the two motives assigned are in no way inconsistent with each other. Our Lord's withdrawal from view after His miracles is frequently noticed in this Gospel. The reason here explained would naturally operate at other times also; but there are peculiarities of language which seem to show that John beheld in all the 'signs'—which were occasional manifestations of the glory of Jesus—emblems of His whole manifestation, of all that lay between His coming forth from the Father and His final withdrawal from the world and return to the Father. There is a beautiful harmony between the prayer of which other Gospels speak, the solitariness ('Himself alone') here brought before us, and the later words of Jesus, 'He that sent me is with me, He hath not left me alone' (chap. viii. 29), 'I am not alone, because the Father is with me' (chap. xvi. 32).

No one can read the four narratives of this miracle without being struck with their essential harmony in the midst of apparent diversities. Every narrative contributes some new feature; almost every one introduces some particular which we cannot with positive certainty adjust with the other narratives, though we may see clearly that in more ways than one it might be so adjusted. It is especially necessary in this place to call attention to these other narratives, because John alone records the impression made upon the multitude, and (as has been well suggested by Godet) this impression may explain a very remarkable word used both by Matthew and by Mark. These Evangelists relate (Matt. xiv. 22; Mark vi. 45) that Jesus 'compelled' His disciples to return to their boat until He should have dismissed the people. No motive for the compulsion is supplied by the two writers who use the word. If, however, this was the crisis of the Galilean ministry, and the multitudes, impressed by other recent miracles, and moved beyond measure by the last, must now be withheld from their premature design to proclaim Him king, it becomes necessary forcibly to separate the disciples as well as Himself from the excited crowds in the hour of their highly-wrought enthusiasm. Even though Jesus Himself were absent, yet if the contagious excitement of the people should communicate itself to the Galilean disciples also, the plan of His working would (humanly speaking) be frustrated. Perhaps, too, this decisive breaking with the impulses of the multitude, this practical renunciation of the honours the people would confer and of the political sovereignty to which they would raise Him, may furnish one reason for John's selection of this miracle, already so well known in the Church. Another reason is made evident by the discourse of this chapter.

Ver. 16. **And when even was now come, his disciples went down unto the sea.** Before Jesus retired to the mountain He had constrained His disciples to leave Him for the shore: when they had left He dismissed the people, withdrawing from them, probably by exercising such influence as is implied in chap. v. 13, viii. 59, x. 39.

Ver. 17. **And entered into a boat, and were coming over the sea unto Capernaum. And darkness had already come on, and Jesus was not yet come to them.** Probably they were intending to coast along the shore of the lake between Bethsaida-Julias and Capernaum: in this

they were no doubt following their Master's directions. The words that follow show clearly that they expected Him to rejoin them at some point on the coast.

Ver. 18. **And the sea was raging by reason of a great wind that blew.** The darkness and the storm rendered their position one of great peril. There had arisen one of those sudden and violent squalls to which all inland waters surrounded by lofty hills intersected with gullies are liable. Many travellers bear witness to the fact that such storms beat with peculiar force upon the sea of Galilee. In the present instance the 'great wind' would seem to have been from the north. The immediate effect of the storm was to drive the disciples out to sea till they reached the middle of the lake, which is at its broadest a little south of their starting-point.

Ver. 19. **So when they had rowed about five and twenty or thirty furlongs.** If the wind had driven them southwards soon after their starting, they would be near the eastern coast at a point where the lake is about forty furlongs broad. If therefore they had rowed twenty-five or thirty furlongs, they would not be far from 'the midst of the sea' (Mark vi. 47). The agreement between the two narratives is clearly 'undesigned,' and therefore the more interesting.—**They behold Jesus walking on the sea, and drawing nigh unto the boat: and they were afraid.** When Jesus drew near to the boat, it was the 'fourth watch' (Matt. xiv. 25), and therefore the darkest part of the night; some eight or nine hours had passed since they left Him with the multitude. The wind was boisterous, the sea raging, their strength was spent with rowing (Mark vi. 48), when suddenly they behold Jesus walking on the sea, in the immediate neighbourhood of the boat. They knew not that it was He, and were terrified.

Vers. 20, 21. **But he saith unto them, It is I; be not afraid. They were willing therefore to receive him into the boat.** His voice and manner were enough to remove all their fears. They would have kept away from the apparition, affrighted; but now their will was to receive their Master. This renewed mention of the 'will' (compare chap. v. 6, 40) is striking and characteristic. In the first two Evangelists we read of our

Lord's entering the boat, and some have thought that the words here present a difficulty as implying a desire on the part of the disciples that was not fulfilled. But there is really no discrepancy whatever. John mentions the will only, assuming that every reader would understand that the will was carried into effect (comp. i. 43, v. 35).—**And immediately the boat was at the land whither they went.** They were making for Capernaum, and this town they reached immediately. It is plain that John intends to relate what was not an ordinary occurrence but a miracle. The first two Evangelists do not speak of it, but their words are in perfect harmony with John's account, for immediately after the lulling of the wind ~~they~~ mention the completion of the voyage.

This is the fourth of the 'signs' recorded in this Gospel. Unlike the former miracle (the feeding of the multitude), it is not mentioned again or in any way expressly referred to; hence we have less certainty as to the position assigned to it by the Evangelist. That to him it was not a mere matter of history we may be sure; but the event is not as closely interwoven with the texture of his narrative as are the other miracles which he records. The thoughts which are here prominent are the separation of the disciples from their Lord, their difficulties amid the darkness and the storm, their fear as they dimly see Jesus approaching, the words which remove their fear, their 'will' to receive Him, the immediate end of all their trouble and danger. The cardinal thought is their safety when they have received Jesus. The narrative is connected with that which precedes in that, here as there, all attention is concentrated on the Redeemer Himself, who in sovereign power and in infinite grace manifests His glory. It is still more closely joined with what comes after, as it teaches on the one hand the safety of all who are with Him (vers. 37-39), and on the other the necessity of man's *receiving* Him, opening his heart to His words, committing Himself to Him by faith (ver. 40). We cannot doubt that the question of Jesus and the answer of the twelve, of which we read in ver. 68, are closely linked with the teaching of that night in which the disciples found at once the end of peril and rest from toil when they saw and received their Lord.

## CHAPTER VI. 22-71.

### *Passover Discourses of Jesus.*

- 22 **T**HE day following, when<sup>1</sup> the people<sup>2</sup> which stood on the other side of the sea saw that there was none other boat<sup>3</sup> there, save that<sup>4</sup> one whereinto his disciples were entered,<sup>5</sup> and that Jesus went not with his disciples into the boat, but *that* his  
23 disciples were gone<sup>6</sup> away alone; (Howbeit there came other<sup>7</sup> boats from<sup>8</sup> Tiberias nigh unto the place where they did eat<sup>a</sup> Ver. 1.  
24 bread,<sup>9</sup> after that the Lord had<sup>8</sup> given thanks:;) When the<sup>b</sup> Ver. 12.

<sup>1</sup> omit when

<sup>2</sup> multitude

<sup>3</sup> little boat

<sup>4</sup> omit that

<sup>5</sup> omit from whereinto to entered

<sup>6</sup> went

<sup>7</sup> omit other

<sup>8</sup> the bread

people<sup>8</sup> therefore saw that Jesus was not there, neither his disciples, they also took shipping,<sup>9</sup> and came to <sup>c</sup> Capernaum, <sup>c</sup> Ver. 17.  
 25 seeking for Jesus. And when they had found him on the other side of the sea, they said unto him, <sup>d</sup> Rabbi, when camest thou <sup>d</sup> Chap. i. 38.  
 26 hither? Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles,<sup>10</sup> but  
 27 because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled.<sup>11</sup> Labour<sup>12</sup> not for the meat<sup>13</sup> which <sup>e</sup> perisheth, but for that meat which <sup>e</sup> Chap. iv. 13, 14.  
<sup>e</sup> endureth<sup>14</sup> unto <sup>f</sup> everlasting<sup>15</sup> life, which the <sup>f</sup> Son of man <sup>f</sup> Chap. iii. 13.  
 shall <sup>g</sup> give unto you: <sup>g</sup> for him hath God the Father sealed.<sup>16</sup> <sup>g</sup> Chap. i. 51.  
 28 Then said they<sup>17</sup> unto him, What shall<sup>18</sup> we do, that we <sup>h</sup> Chap. x. 28.  
 29 might<sup>19</sup> work the <sup>h</sup> works of God? Jesus answered and said <sup>i</sup> Chap. v. 37, x. 36.  
 unto them, This is the <sup>i</sup> work of God, that ye <sup>j</sup> believe on<sup>20</sup> <sup>j</sup> Chap. ix. 4; <sup>k</sup> Cor. xv. 58.  
 him whom he hath<sup>21</sup> sent. They said therefore unto him, <sup>k</sup> Rev. ii. 26.  
 30 <sup>l</sup> What sign shewest thou then,<sup>22</sup> that we may see, and believe <sup>l</sup> Chap. v. 38.  
 31 thee? what dost thou work? <sup>m</sup> Our fathers did eat manna<sup>23</sup> <sup>m</sup> Comp. <sup>n</sup> John iii. 23.  
 in the desert; <sup>n</sup> as it is written, <sup>o</sup> He gave them bread from<sup>24</sup> <sup>n</sup> Chap. ii. 18.  
 32 heaven to eat. Then Jesus<sup>25</sup> said unto them, Verily, verily, I <sup>o</sup> See Matt. xii. 38.  
 say unto you, Moses gave you not that<sup>27</sup> bread from<sup>26</sup> heaven; <sup>p</sup> xxi. 23; <sup>q</sup> Luke xxiii. 8.  
 but my Father giveth you the true<sup>28</sup> bread from<sup>26</sup> heaven.<sup>29</sup> <sup>r</sup> Vers. 49, 58; <sup>s</sup> Ex. xvi. 15.  
 33 For the bread of God is <sup>t</sup> he<sup>30</sup> which cometh down from<sup>30</sup> <sup>t</sup> Ex. xvi. 4; <sup>u</sup> Ps. lxxviii. 24, 25.  
 34 heaven, and giveth life unto <sup>v</sup> the world. <sup>v</sup> Then said they<sup>31</sup> <sup>v</sup> Vers. 50, 51, 58.  
 35 unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread. And<sup>32</sup> Jesus said <sup>w</sup> Chap. i. 29.  
 unto them, <sup>x</sup> I am the bread of life: <sup>x</sup> he that cometh<sup>33</sup> to me <sup>y</sup> Chap. iv. 15.  
 shall never<sup>34</sup> hunger; and he that believeth on<sup>35</sup> me shall  
 36 never<sup>36</sup> thirst. <sup>y</sup> But I said unto you, That ye also have<sup>37</sup> seen <sup>y</sup> Ver. 48.  
 37 me, and believe not. All <sup>z</sup> that<sup>38</sup> the Father giveth me shall <sup>z</sup> Chap. iv. 14.  
 come to me; and him that cometh<sup>39</sup> to me I will in no wise  
 38 cast out. For I <sup>aa</sup> came<sup>40</sup> down from heaven, <sup>aa</sup> not to do mine <sup>aa</sup> Ver. 26.  
 39 own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the <sup>ab</sup> Ver. 39;  
 Father's will which hath sent me,<sup>41</sup> that <sup>ab</sup> of<sup>43</sup> all<sup>43</sup> which he <sup>ab</sup> chap. x. 29,  
 hath <sup>ac</sup> given me I<sup>44</sup> should lose nothing, but should raise it up <sup>ac</sup> xvii. 2, 6, 7,  
 40 again<sup>45</sup> at <sup>ad</sup> the last day. And<sup>46</sup> this is the will of him that <sup>ad</sup> 9, 24.  
 sent me,<sup>47</sup> that every one which seeth<sup>48</sup> the Son, and believeth <sup>ad</sup> Comp. vers. 43, 65.  
 on<sup>49</sup> him, may<sup>50</sup> have <sup>ae</sup> everlasting<sup>51</sup> life: and I will<sup>53</sup> raise him <sup>ae</sup> Chap. iii. 13.  
 up at <sup>af</sup> the last day. <sup>af</sup> Chap. v. 30.  
<sup>ag</sup> See chap. x. 28.  
<sup>ah</sup> Vers. 40, 44, 54; chap. xi. 24, xii. 48.  
<sup>ai</sup> Ver. 27; chap. iii. 36.

<sup>9</sup> they themselves got into the little boats	<sup>10</sup> ye saw signs	<sup>11</sup> satisfied
<sup>12</sup> Work	<sup>13</sup> eating	<sup>14</sup> the eating which abideth
<sup>15</sup> for him the Father, God, did seal	<sup>16</sup> They said therefore	<sup>17</sup> eternal
<sup>18</sup> may	<sup>19</sup> in	<sup>20</sup> omit hath
<sup>21</sup> the manna	<sup>22</sup> wilderness	<sup>23</sup> out of
<sup>24</sup> the	<sup>25</sup> omit true	<sup>26</sup> Jesus therefore
<sup>27</sup> They said therefore	<sup>28</sup> add, the true bread.	<sup>29</sup> that
<sup>30</sup> shall in no wise	<sup>31</sup> omit And	<sup>32</sup> is coming
<sup>33</sup> that ye have indeed	<sup>34</sup> shall in no wise ever	<sup>35</sup> All that which
<sup>36</sup> Because I have come	<sup>37</sup> is the will of him that sent me	<sup>38</sup> is coming
<sup>39</sup> all that	<sup>40</sup> me, of it I	<sup>41</sup> omit of
<sup>42</sup> will of my Father	<sup>43</sup> omit again	<sup>44</sup> For
<sup>45</sup> should	<sup>46</sup> beholdeth	<sup>47</sup> in
<sup>48</sup> eternal	<sup>49</sup> and that I should	



41 The Jews then <sup>53</sup> murmured at <sup>54</sup> him, because he said, I am  
42 the bread which came down from <sup>55</sup> heaven. And they said,

<sup>56</sup> Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother  
we know? how is it then that he saith, <sup>57</sup> I came <sup>58</sup> down from <sup>59</sup>

43 heaven? Jesus therefore <sup>60</sup> answered and said unto them,

44 Murmur not among yourselves. <sup>61</sup> No man <sup>62</sup> can come to me,  
except the Father which hath <sup>63</sup> sent me draw <sup>64</sup> him: and I

45 will raise him up at <sup>65</sup> the last day. <sup>66</sup> It is written in the  
prophets, And they shall be all <sup>67</sup> taught of God. <sup>68</sup> Every  
man therefore that <sup>69</sup> hath heard, <sup>70</sup> and hath learned of the

46 Father, <sup>71</sup> cometh unto me. <sup>72</sup> Not that any man <sup>73</sup> hath seen  
the Father, save he which is of <sup>74</sup> God, he hath seen the

47 Father. Verily, verily, I say unto you, <sup>75</sup> He that believeth on

48 me <sup>76</sup> hath everlasting <sup>77</sup> life. <sup>78</sup> I am that <sup>79</sup> bread of life.

49 <sup>80</sup> Your fathers did eat manna <sup>81</sup> in the wilderness, and are  
50 dead. <sup>82</sup> This is the bread which cometh down from <sup>83</sup> heaven,

51 that a man <sup>84</sup> may eat thereof, and not die. <sup>85</sup> I am the living  
bread which came down from <sup>86</sup> heaven: if any man <sup>87</sup> eat <sup>88</sup> of  
this bread, he shall live for ever: and <sup>89</sup> the bread that I will

give is my <sup>90</sup> flesh, which I will give <sup>91</sup> for the life of <sup>92</sup> the world.

52 The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How

53 can this man give us <sup>93</sup> his flesh to eat? Then Jesus <sup>94</sup> said unto

them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat <sup>95</sup> the <sup>96</sup> flesh  
of the <sup>97</sup> Son of man, and drink <sup>98</sup> his blood, ye have no <sup>99</sup> life in

54 you. <sup>100</sup> Whoso <sup>101</sup> eateth my <sup>102</sup> flesh, and drinketh my blood,

<sup>103</sup> hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at <sup>104</sup> the last day.

55 For my <sup>105</sup> flesh is meat <sup>106</sup> indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.

56 He that eateth my <sup>107</sup> flesh, and drinketh my blood, <sup>108</sup> dwelleth <sup>109</sup>

57 in me, and I in him. <sup>110</sup> As the living Father hath <sup>111</sup> sent me,  
and I live by <sup>112</sup> the Father: so he that eateth me, <sup>113</sup> even <sup>114</sup> he <sup>115</sup>

58 shall live by <sup>116</sup> me. <sup>117</sup> This is that bread which came down  
from <sup>118</sup> heaven: not as <sup>119</sup> your fathers did eat manna, <sup>120</sup> and are

dead: <sup>121</sup> he <sup>122</sup> that eateth of <sup>123</sup> this bread shall live for ever.

59 These things said he in the synagogue, <sup>124</sup> as he taught <sup>125</sup> in  
<sup>126</sup> Capernaum.

60 <sup>127</sup> Many therefore of his disciples, when they had <sup>128</sup> heard <sup>129</sup> this,

<sup>53</sup> therefore

<sup>54</sup> concerning

<sup>55</sup> out of

<sup>56</sup> how doth he now say

<sup>57</sup> have come

<sup>58</sup> omit therefore

<sup>59</sup> No one

<sup>60</sup> omit hath

<sup>61</sup> shall have drawn

<sup>62</sup> all be

<sup>63</sup> Every one that

<sup>64</sup> add from the Father

<sup>65</sup> omit of the Father

<sup>66</sup> any one

<sup>67</sup> from <sup>68</sup> omit on me

<sup>69</sup> eternal <sup>70</sup> the

<sup>71</sup> the manna

<sup>72</sup> and died <sup>73</sup> out of

<sup>74</sup> shall have eaten

<sup>75</sup> and moreover

<sup>76</sup> omit which I will give

<sup>77</sup> Jesus therefore

<sup>78</sup> have eaten

<sup>79</sup> drunk

<sup>80</sup> not

<sup>81</sup> in yourselves

<sup>82</sup> He that

<sup>83</sup> food

<sup>84</sup> abideth

<sup>85</sup> omit hath

<sup>86</sup> because of

<sup>87</sup> omit even

<sup>88</sup> he also

<sup>89</sup> out of

<sup>90</sup> omit manna

<sup>91</sup> and died <sup>92</sup> omit of

<sup>93</sup> omit in the synagogue

<sup>94</sup> was teaching in a synagogue

<sup>95</sup> omit had

<sup>b</sup> Matt. xiii  
55-

<sup>c</sup> Comp. ver.  
65.

<sup>d</sup> Isa. liv. 13;  
Jer. xxxi.  
34; Micah  
iv. 2.  
<sup>e</sup> Ver. 37.

<sup>f</sup> Chap. i. 18;  
Ex. xxxiii.  
20; Col. i.  
15; 1 Tim.  
i. 17, vi. 16;  
1 John iv.  
12, 20.  
Comp. chap.  
iii. 13, viii.  
55; Matt.  
xi. 27.

<sup>g</sup> Vers. 27, 40.  
<sup>h</sup> Ver. 35.  
<sup>i</sup> Ver. 37.  
<sup>j</sup> See vers. 33,  
38.

<sup>k</sup> Ver. 53, etc.  
Comp. chap.  
i. 14; Rom.  
i. 3, viii. 3,  
ix. 5;  
1 Tim. iii.  
16; Heb. ii.  
14; 1 John  
iv. 2;  
2 John 7.

<sup>m</sup> Chap. i. 29.  
<sup>n</sup> Chap. i. 51.  
<sup>o</sup> Vers. 27, 40.  
<sup>p</sup> Ver. 39.

<sup>q</sup> Chap. xv.  
4, 5; 1 John  
iii. 24,  
iv. 15, 16.  
<sup>r</sup> Chap. v. 26.  
<sup>s</sup> Comp. Rom.  
viii. 10.  
<sup>t</sup> See vers. 33,  
38.  
<sup>u</sup> Ver. 37.

<sup>v</sup> Chap. ii. 22

<sup>w</sup> Ver. 66.

- 61 said, This is an hard saying ; who can hear it ? <sup>96</sup> When <sup>x</sup> Jesus <sup>x</sup> Chap. ii. 24.  
 knew <sup>97</sup> in himself that his disciples murmured at it, he said <sup>98</sup>  
 62 unto them, Doth this <sup>99</sup> offend you ? <sup>99</sup> What and <sup>1</sup> if ye shall <sup>y</sup> Chap. xvi. 1.  
 63 see <sup>2</sup> the Son of man ascend up <sup>3</sup> where <sup>4</sup> he was before ? <sup>4</sup> It <sup>See Matt.</sup>  
 is the spirit that quickeneth ; <sup>5</sup> the flesh profiteth nothing : the <sup>v. 29.</sup>  
 words that I speak <sup>6</sup> unto you, *they* are spirit, and *they* are life. <sup>s Ver. 38,</sup>  
 64 But <sup>7</sup> there are some of you that believe not. For <sup>x</sup> Jesus knew <sup>8</sup> Vers. 36, 71.  
 from the beginning who they were that believed not, and <sup>9</sup> who <sup>c</sup> Ver. 71.  
 65 should <sup>10</sup> betray him. And he said, Therefore <sup>11</sup> said I <sup>12</sup> unto <sup>d</sup> Vers. 44, 45-  
 you, that no man <sup>13</sup> can come unto me, except it were <sup>14</sup> given  
 66 unto him of my <sup>15</sup> Father. <sup>16</sup> From that *time* <sup>17</sup> many of his <sup>e</sup> Ver. 60  
 disciples went back, and walked no more <sup>18</sup> with him.  
 67 Then said Jesus <sup>19</sup> unto the twelve, Will ye also go away ? <sup>14</sup>  
 68 Then <sup>20</sup> Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we  
 69 go ? <sup>21</sup> thou hast <sup>22</sup> the <sup>23</sup> words of eternal life. <sup>24</sup> And we be- <sup>f</sup> Ver. 63 ;  
 lieve <sup>25</sup> and are sure <sup>26</sup> that thou art that Christ, <sup>27</sup> the Son of the <sup>Acts v. 20.</sup>  
 70 living God. <sup>28</sup> Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen <sup>29</sup> you <sup>See ver. 27.</sup>  
 71 twelve, <sup>30</sup> and one of you is a devil ? He <sup>31</sup> spake of <sup>32</sup> Judas <sup>g</sup> Chap. i. 49,  
 Iscariot <sup>33</sup> *the son of Simon* : <sup>34</sup> for he it was <sup>35</sup> that should <sup>36</sup> be- <sup>xi. 27 ;</sup>  
 tray <sup>37</sup> him, being <sup>38</sup> one of the twelve. <sup>Matt. xvi.</sup>  
 96 him <sup>97</sup> But Jesus knowing <sup>98</sup> concerning this, said <sup>100</sup>  
 99 Doth this make you to stumble <sup>101</sup> What then <sup>102</sup> if ye behold  
 100 ascending <sup>103</sup> maketh to live <sup>104</sup> have spoken  
 101 who it was that would <sup>105</sup> For this cause have I said <sup>106</sup> no one  
 102 have been <sup>107</sup> the <sup>108</sup> Upon this <sup>109</sup> no longer  
 103 Jesus therefore said <sup>110</sup> Would ye also go ? <sup>111</sup> omit Then  
 104 go away <sup>112</sup> omit the <sup>113</sup> have believed <sup>114</sup> and we know  
 105 that thou art the Holy One of God <sup>115</sup> Did not I choose  
 106 the twelve <sup>116</sup> Now he <sup>117</sup> omit Iscariot  
 107 add Iscariot <sup>118</sup> was about to betray <sup>119</sup> omit being

CONTENTS. In the miracle of the multiplying of the bread Jesus has symbolically presented Himself as the true bread of life. This thought is now unfolded in the various discourses with which the remainder of the chapter is occupied, while at the same time the effect of these discourses is traced upon the different classes of hearers introduced to us. The subordinate parts of this section are determined by the mention of these classes—(1) vers. 22-40, a discourse addressed to the ‘multitude,’ which must here, as elsewhere, be carefully distinguished from the ‘Jews ;’ (2) vers. 41-51, a discourse to the ‘Jews,’ who had ‘murmured’ at the words spoken to the multitude. The discourse contains the same great truths as those previously dwelt upon, but in a sharper and more pointed form ; (3) vers. 52-59, a discourse by which the ‘Jews’ are still further irritated. Formerly they murmured ; now they strive among themselves, and the discourse becomes still sharper and more pointed than before ; (4) vers. 60-66, in which the effect of the truths spoken by Jesus shows itself even upon the disciples, many of whom are so offended that they walk no more with Him ; (5) vers. 67-71,—while many of the disciples are thus offended, the Twelve, with the exception of Judas, are drawn more closely to

Jesus, and Peter in their name makes confession of his faith.

Ver. 22. The day following, the multitude which stood on the other side of the sea saw that there was none other little boat there, save one, and that Jesus went not with his disciples into the boat, but that his disciples went away alone. During the night of the storm the multitude remained near the scene of the miracle. In the morning they are gathered on the north-eastern coast, deliberating how Jesus might be found. They saw no boat on the shore save one little boat too small to hold the twelve disciples, who could not therefore have returned in it to take away their Master : yet it was certain that when the disciples set sail the evening before Jesus did not go with them. The natural inference was that He was still on the eastern shore, but that His disciples were at Capernaum or some neighbouring place on the other side of the sea.

Ver. 23. Howbeit there came boats from Tiberias nigh unto the place where they did eat the bread, after that the Lord had given thanks. Whilst they were still in wonder and doubt, other boats came across the sea near to the scene of the miracle of the preceding day. These boats were from Tiberias, and from the boatmen who

brought them the multitude would learn at once that neither Jesus nor His disciples had gone thither.

Ver. 24. When the multitude therefore saw that Jesus was not there, neither his disciples, they themselves got into the little boats, and came to Capernaum, seeking for Jesus. If Jesus was neither on the eastern shore nor at Tiberias, He might be sought near Capernaum, in the direction of which town the disciples had sailed. John's words clearly imply that there was an eager and diligent search for Jesus on the part of the multitude before they left the spot where they had witnessed His power. The prominence given to the thought of Jesus in these verses is very marked. What is said of the disciples has no independent value: their movements are described solely that light may be thrown upon those of their Master. When convinced that it was vain further to prosecute the search in that region, the multitude obtained possession of the smaller boats, and came to Capernaum seeking Jesus.

Ver. 25. And when they had found him on the other side of the sea, they said unto him, Rabbi, when camest thou hither? The 'other side' denotes the western coast. Their question on finding Jesus in Capernaum but partly expresses their thoughts, which would rest as much on the *how* as on the 'when' of His coming to this place. He had not left the eastern shore with His disciples; the storm of the night must have forbidden any attempt to make the passage then; and, as they well knew, He had not come to the western shore in their company. The question is not answered, but the eager search which it implied is made to lead the way to deeper instruction as to the miracle which had drawn them to follow Him.

Ver. 26. Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw signs, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were satisfied. This solemn declaration is only seemingly discordant with ver. 2 or ver. 14. Those who witnessed a miracle of



A Boat on Lake Tiberias.

Jesus, and did not understand its significance, might be said to see the sign and yet not to see it. Indeed, ver. 14 seems to imply a third condition of mind, intermediate between these. Those who had eaten of the loaves saw in the miracle the proof that Jesus was the Prophet who should come: they saw that the wonder was significant, but the words before us show that even this stood below the true perception of the 'sign.' The miracle had led the thoughts of the multitude to the power and dignity of the miracle-worker, but had suggested nothing of a higher and a spiritual work, symbolized by the material bounty that had been bestowed. The design of the work in its relation to the Saviour was to manifest His glory as the Giver of the highest blessings; in its relation to the people, to fix their eyes on Him and to awaken their desire for that of which the bread had been the sign. Part of this purpose has been attained,--they have sought Him eagerly, with toil

and trouble:--He must now so complete their training that they may be led to leave the carnal and seek the spiritual, that they may be brought to behold in His deeds not merely the tokens of His power to satisfy every earthly desire of His followers, but the impress of His Divine character and work.

Ver. 27. Work not for the eating which perisheth. The rendering 'work' is required to bring out the connection with the following verse, in which the same word is used. The language of the original is very expressive:--'Work,' use all the energies of your nature, not unto partaking of perishable but of imperishable food. It is not an act of life but the active life itself that is referred to, and the object of this whole life. When we bring together this verse and that which precedes, we cannot doubt that our Lord, in speaking of working for perishable food, alludes to the labour which the multitude had undergone in their persistent search for Him. As their object

in thus seeking Him had been carnal, not spiritual, this act of theirs (good and wise in itself,—most blessed, had the aim been higher and more true) was a fitting type of their life, a life occupied with the search after material good and the satisfaction of lower wants and desires.—But for the eating which abideth, unto eternal life which the Son of man shall give unto you. In contrast with what they had sought in thus toiling to discover Him, Jesus sets the feast which it is His glory to offer and of which they should be eager to partake. As in iv. 14 He had spoken of the gift of water which had power to quench for ever the recipient's thirst, so here He speaks of an eating that abides and never perishes. That verse and this are closely parallel, and each helps to explain the other. In the one Jesus says what the water that He giveth shall become *in him* that receiveth it : here in like manner it is not of meat that He speaks, but of 'eating,'—not of food itself, but of food *appropriated*. In both passages the words 'unto eternal life' occur ; and in each case there is some difficulty in determining whether the phrase belongs to the word preceding or to the whole thought of the clause. Yet, as in the first it is probable that 'life eternal' is the end attained when the fountain is opened in the soul, so in this verse 'unto' does not seem to belong to 'abideth,' but to express the object of that 'eating' for which they may and ought to work. Not the eating that perisheth, but the eating that abideth, must absorb their labour, that they may thus win eternal life. If this is the connection intended by John, we must certainly join the second relative 'which' (not with 'eating,' but) with the words that immediately precede, viz. 'eternal life.' There is nothing difficult in such a connection of the words: on the contrary, it is easier than any other, and best agrees with the following verses and with other passages in the Gospel. Almost uniformly in this chapter Jesus speaks of Himself as the bread of life, and of the Father as the Giver of the bread, while 'eternal life' is the result of receiving Him as the living bread (vers. 33, 51, 54). A close parallel is found in chap. x. 28, 'I give unto them eternal life,' as also in chap. xvii. 2 ; and the connection of the 'Son of man' with this gift reminds us at once of chap. iii. 14. How this gift will become theirs the later verses explain : the two points here are that this life is obtained from the Son of man—from the God-man alone, and that it is a free gift from Him. This is not inconsistent with the 'working' of which Jesus has spoken. The multitudes had toiled, in that they had put aside all obstacles to come to Him : having come to Him they may receive His free gift. The reception of the gift is opposed to labouring for wages or for merit, but not to earnest effort. The gift can be bestowed in its fulness on those only whose one thought and one effort are bent on receiving it : were there no such activity on our part, we could not be in a position to receive the gift without destroying the nature we possess.—For him the Father, God, did seal. For this very purpose that He might be the Giver of eternal life, was He made the Son of man, was He sent by the Father into the world. (Compare chap. x. 36, xvii. 2.) He came commissioned by the Father : on Him the Father's seal was set. The reference is not to the miracle just related, as if Jesus would say that what they had themselves seen was the Father's attestation of Him, the

evidence which should have led them to believe in Him. This is but a small part of the truth, as what is said in chap. v. on the witness of the Father very plainly shows. There, however, the thought is made to rest on the continued and abiding testimony of the Father : here the whole attestation is looked upon as concentrated in one past act of the Father, as included and implied in the act of 'sending' the Son : and this Father is 'God,' that God whom they themselves allowed to be the supreme source and end of all things. The special reference to the Father in this verse, where Jesus speaks of the gift of eternal life, receives its explanation from ver. 57 (which see).

Ver. 28. They said therefore unto him, What must we do, that we may work the works of God? Our Lord's answer seems to have been but little comprehended by 'the multitude.' They reply with an earnest inquiry, taking up all that they have understood, but missing the central point of His words. He had first bidden them work, His last word had spoken of the Divine authority He bore: their answer deals with 'works of God,' but contains no reference to eternal life or to the promise of a free gift from the Son of man. The works of the law were to them a familiar thought, and they understood that God through His new prophet was commanding them to do some new work. Their question, 'What must we do,' shows a teachable disposition, and a willingness to learn from Him what was the will of God. But what did they mean by 'the works of God'? The expression is used in various senses in the Old Testament. The works of the Lord may be the works done by Him, or they may be the works which He commands and which are according to His mind. In this verse we cannot think of miracles, nor is it easy to believe that the people can have had in their thoughts the works which God produces in those who are His. In its connection here, the expression recalls such passages as Jer. xlviii. 10 ; 1 Cor. xv. 58 ; Rev. ii. 26. The whole phrase (with slight alteration) occurs in Num. vii. 11, in the Septuagint : 'Aaron shall offer the Levites before the Lord . . . that they may work the works of the Lord.' As the meaning in these passages is *the works which the Lord would have them do*, as the works of the law are those which the law prescribes, so here the works of God signify those which He commands, and which therefore are pleasing to Him.

Ver. 29. Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe in him whom he sent. The one work which God would have them do is believing in Him whom He sent. The people had spoken of 'works,' thinking of outward deeds ; but that which God commands is one work, faith in Jesus. This faith leads to union with Him and participation of His Spirit, and thus includes in itself all works that are pleasing to God. We must not suppose that our Lord intends to rebuke their question, 'What must we do,' as if He would say, It is not doing, but believing. The act of believing in Jesus, the soul's casting itself on Him with perfect trust, is here spoken of as a work, as something which requires the exercise of man's will and calls forth determination and effort. It is very noticeable that these words of Jesus directly touch that thought in ver. 27, which their answer (ver. 28) neglected. The work of theirs of which He had spoken was their toil to come to Him : He had prescribed no

other work, but had sought to lead them to the higher object,—the attainment of the abiding nourishment, unto eternal life offered by the Son of man. So here: every disturbing or extraneous thought is put aside; and, with even unusual directness, force, and simplicity, Jesus shows that the one cardinal requirement of the Father is the reception of the Son by faith.

Ver. 30. **They said therefore unto him, What then dost thou as a sign, that we may see, and believe thee? What dost thou work?** The words of Jesus had now become too plain to be misunderstood. It was clear that He would turn them away from such works as they had had in view, and fix all thought upon Himself; while at the same time His words breathed no spirit of mere self-assertion, but claimed to be an expression of the Divine will. Such a claim no other prophet had ever made; such a claim can only be justified by some special sign which no one can challenge or mistake; and the sign must correspond with the claim. The day before Jesus had been with them as a Teacher only: the miracle had constrained them to acknowledge Him as 'the Prophet who should come.' But the words He has just used can only suit One who is higher even than Moses. Before they can believe Him when He thus speaks (note the significant change from 'believe in Him,' ver. 29, to 'believe thee,' *i.e.* accept thy claims) some sign equal to the greatest wrought by Moses, or even some greater sign, must be displayed.

Ver. 31. **Our fathers did eat the manna in the wilderness.** Amongst the miracles wrought by Moses the Jews seem (and with reason) to have assigned to the manna a foremost place. In a Hebrew commentary on Ecclesiastes there is preserved a saying of great interest in connection with this passage: 'As the first Redeemer made the manna to descend, as it is written, Behold I will rain bread from heaven for you; so the later Redeemer also shall make the manna to descend, as it is written, May there be abundance of corn in the earth' (Ps. lxxii. 19).—**As it is written, He gave them bread out of heaven to eat.** Of the many characteristics distinguishing the miracle of the manna, one is here dwelt upon,—neither the abundance of its supply nor its continuance, but its source: it was 'bread out of heaven.' The bread with which they themselves had just been fed, though marvellously increased in quantity, was still natural bread, the bread of earth: 'bread out of heaven' was the proof received by their fathers that their Benefactor was the God of heaven. What similar evidence could Jesus offer? The words here quoted from Scripture do not exactly agree with any passage of the Old Testament. In Ps. lxxviii. 24 we read (following the Greek version), 'And He rained for them manna to eat, and gave them bread of heaven;' and in Ex. xvi. 4, 'Behold I rain for you bread out of heaven.' The words in the verse before us are therefore substantially a quotation from the psalm, with one important change introduced from the narrative of Exodus, 'out of heaven' for 'of heaven.' The change is important, because it points more distinctly to the source of the supply and not its quality only, and because the expression 'out of heaven' is taken up by our Lord and used by Him with marked emphasis.

Ver. 32. **Jesus therefore said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you.** The gravity of the truth declared in this verse is indicated by the

solemn 'Verily, verily,' which now occurs for the second time in this discourse.—**Moses gave you not the bread out of heaven; but my Father giveth you the bread out of heaven, the true bread.** If we compare these words with ver. 26, in which the formula 'Verily, verily' is first used, we easily trace the advance in the thought. There, in general terms, the people are enjoined not to set their thought on the perishable food; here Jesus declares that the true bread given out of heaven is not the manna, but that which His Father is at this moment offering them. In the words of ver. 31, 'he gave them bread,' the multitude may have had Moses in their thoughts; but that is not the meaning of the psalmist, the context having the clearest reference to God. It is probable that our Lord here mentions Moses only to point out more distinctly the past and inferior gift of the manna by the servant of God, in contrast with the true bread now offered to them by the Father. It was not Moses who gave the manna; still less had their fathers received from him the true bread of heaven. The Father, who gave to their fathers the symbol, offers the reality now. 'My Father,' Jesus says, because He is leading His hearers onwards to the truth declared in the next two verses, that the 'true bread' given out of heaven is Himself, the Son.

Ver. 33. **For the bread of God is that which cometh down out of heaven, and giveth life unto the world.** The 'bread of God' is the bread which God gives (ver. 32). It is not easy to decide on the translation of this verse. The Greek equally admits of two renderings, either 'he that cometh,' or 'that (bread) which cometh.' If the former is correct, our Lord begins here to identify Himself with the 'true bread;' if the latter, the figure is retained unexplained until ver. 35. The expressions in vers. 50 and 58 do not decide the point; for after ver. 35 the descent from heaven might with equal propriety be connected either with the bread or with Him whom the bread symbolized. Nor does the present tense 'cometh down' compel us to refer the word to the bread; for Jesus might be designated 'He that cometh from heaven' (comp. chap. iii. 31) as correctly as 'He that came from heaven:' one description relates to nature and origin, the other to a past fact of history. On the whole, however, it seems best to carry on the thought of the bread in this verse. The very word 'come down' is used (Ex. xvi.) in the account of the manna; and the answer of the multitude in ver. 34 seems to show that no new and (to them) strange thought has come in since the mention of the Father's gift. But if the figure is still continued in this verse, it is only a thin veil that conceals the truth. In ver. 27 the Son of man is He who gives eternal life; here it is the bread of God that giveth life unto the world.—The last word is very significant. The manna had been for 'the fathers;' the true bread is for the world. We are reminded at once of chap. iii. 16, 'God so loved the world,' and of chap. iv. 42, 'the Saviour of the world.' The unlimited offer also recalls chap. iv. 14, 'Whosoever hath drunk of the water that I will give him;' and in both cases the result is the same.

Ver. 34. **They said therefore unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread.** We cannot see in these words the mere expression of a desire that earthly wants may be satisfied (comp. iv. 15). This would have incurred rebuke (comp. ver. 26),

and not led to clearer teaching, such as is found in the coming verses. Jesus, moreover, is not dealing with 'the Jews' (who meet us at ver. 41), but with the multitude,—people who were indeed no more than half enlightened, but whose minds were not shut against the truth. His words in the following verses are altogether such as He was wont to address to men who truly sought the light, though not fully conscious of what they sought.

Ver. 35. **Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life,—the bread, that is, that contains life in itself, and thus is able to give life unto the world. The Father giveth 'the true bread' (ver. 32) in giving His Son; the Son of man giveth eternal life (ver. 27) in imparting Himself. To this declaration everything has been leading,—the bread of the miracle, the manna, every reproof (ver. 26), every encouragement (ver. 27).—He that is coming to me shall in no wise hunger. The original words are chosen with exquisite delicacy. The figure is not that of one who has achieved a toilsome and lengthened journey (as if the words ran, 'he that at length has reached me'), but that of one whose resolve is taken, and who sets out in the right way,—he that 'is coming' unto Jesus shall cease to hunger. Other passages may speak of the disciple as one who *has come* to Jesus; this with equal truth represents him as one who is *coming towards* Jesus, whose aim and desire and constant thoughts are towards his Lord. The hunger of the spirit ceases, the restless want and search for satisfaction are at an end; the 'true bread,' that which gives real sustenance, is received.—And he that believeth in me shall in no wise ever thirst.** In these words we have an image similar to the last, but not the same. The quenching of thirst is even a stronger figure than the satisfaction of hunger, and thus (as usually in the poetry of the Old Testament) the thought of the second member is an advance upon that of the first. It may seem remarkable that 'ever' is not joined with both members of the verse; but (as the other words also show) the first simply expresses once for all the cessation of hunger,—hunger is at an end; whilst the second suggests the continuous presence of that which banishes thirst. Faith is really set forth in both clauses. The first presents it in the simplicity and power of the act of will,—the will turned towards Jesus; the second brings it into prominence as the continuous movement of the soul towards union with Him. It is not right therefore to interpret the 'coming' as part of the 'believing,' or to take either as denoting a momentary act belonging to the beginning only of the Christian life. Each figure, with a force peculiarly its own, expresses the abiding relation of the true disciple to his Lord; but only by a combination such as is here given could we have vividly presented to us both the *immediate* and the *continuous* satisfaction of spirit which Jesus imparts. There is probably another reason for the introduction of the figure of 'thirst.' It is not with the manna alone that Jesus is now dealing. He had fed the multitudes with bread, but the meal at which He entertained them as His guests was designed to be the symbol of the Paschal feast (see the note on ver. 4). It was natural therefore thus to enlarge the symbols, that his feast may be kept in mind, and the way prepared for the words of later verses (53-56).

Ver. 36. **But I said unto you, that ye have**

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indeed seen me, and believe not. When had such words been uttered? Certainly the reference is not to chap. v. 37, spoken in Jerusalem to the Jews, not to the multitude in Galilee. It is not likely that Jesus is speaking of words of censure not recorded in this Gospel; and it is hardly possible to understand the simple expression 'I said unto you' in the sense, 'I would have you know,' 'this is what I would say.' We must take the words as referring to the substance, to the spirit if not the letter, of something previously said in this chapter, and we can do this without any violence of interpretation. It is remarkable that the people themselves have used words almost identical (ver. 30): 'What doest Thou as a sign, that we may see and believe Thee?'—that is, may see Thee in Thy working, and believe Thee. This is a confession on their part that as yet they had seen no sign that had led them to see and believe Him. The words of Jesus in ver. 26 imply that in truth they had not seen 'signs': they had seen His miracles, but these had not so proved themselves to be 'signs' as to lead the people to see and believe Him. The charge, therefore, that 'they seeing saw not' is perfectly equivalent to what is said in that verse; they had indeed seen Him in the works which were the manifestation of Himself, but they had not been led to faith. The charge is very grave, but it is not made in anger, nor does it leave the accused in hopelessness: not judgment, but encouragement, is the spirit that pervades this part of the discourse. Perhaps it is for this very reason that the word is 'I said,' not 'I say.' The fact was so; it may be so still; but the state is one that need not last,—even now it may pass away.

Ver. 37. **All that which the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that is coming to me I will in no wise cast out.** These words have been understood by some as a reproach: 'How different are ye from those whom my Father giveth me!' but such an interpretation is quite inconsistent with the context. At present, indeed, those to whom Jesus speaks are not believers; but even in their case His mission may not be a failure,—they may be given to Him, and He will not cast them out. Up to this point the only gift spoken of has been a gift to *men* (vers. 27, 31, 32, 33, 34), especially the Father's gift of the Son to be the bread of life. Here the converse is suddenly introduced—the Father's gift to *the Son*. What Jesus brings to men is the Father's gift to them: what Jesus receives in the homage and belief and love of men is the Father's gift to Him. The form of expression is remarkable, 'all that which the Father giveth me.' A passage closely akin to this we find in chap. xvii. (which has many points of contact with this chapter), and in close connection with the gift which (ver. 27) the Son bestows, the gift of eternal life. The passage is xvii. 2: 'As Thou hast given Him power over all flesh, in order that all that which Thou hast given Him, He may give to them eternal life.' In both these verses the totality of the Father's gift is presented first, and then the individuals who compose this gift and who themselves receive the gift which the Son bestows. The gift of the Father must not be understood by us in the sense of a predestinating decree. Both here and in the other passages of this Gospel where we read of the Father as giving to the Son His people (chaps. vi. 37, 39, x. 29, xvii. 2, 6, 9, 24, xviii. 9), it is the moral and spiritual state of the

heart that is thought of under the word. This state of heart by which they are prepared to listen to the voice of Jesus is due to God alone. The truth expressed here by 'giving' is expressed in ver. 44 by the 'drawing' of the Father, and in ver. 45 by 'learning' and 'hearing' from Him. Such preparation of heart is necessary: as Chrysostom expresses it, faith in Jesus is 'no chance matter, but one that needs an impulse from above,'—from Him who worketh in us both to will and to work (Phil. ii. 13). The test, then, of this work in the heart is the coming to Christ. The two words 'come' in this verse are different: in the first instance the meaning is 'shall reach me;' in the second we might almost render the words 'he that is coming towards me.' What was said on the 35th verse is fully applicable here, for the expression is the same. We cannot read the words without being reminded of the most touching of the Saviour's parables: the prodigal arose and came towards his father, but when he was yet a great way off his father ran to meet him.

Ver. 38. Because I have come down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. The previous verse was full of the power and energy of love; but even then Jesus expresses no feeling or purpose of His own as the motive of His acts. He will cast out none, because such is the Father's will, and to do this will He has come down from heaven (comp. ver. 33).—It may be well, however, to observe that a different preposition from that in ver. 33 is here used: here 'from,' for it is the work of Jesus; there 'out of,' for it is the heavenly origin of His origin that is the prominent thought.

Ver. 39. And this is the will of him that sent me, that all that which he hath given me, of it I should lose nothing. Here, as in ver. 37, the gift of the Father is represented in its totality, 'all that which.' As no part of the precious gift to the multitude, the gift which symbolized Himself, must be left to perish (ver. 12), so no part of the still more precious gift of the Father may be lost by the Son.—But should raise it up at the last day. Should raise 'it,' the whole, all that is comprehended in the gift. The 'last day' can denote only one great period of resurrection for the whole Church of God,—again a proof, as in v. 28, 29, that the teaching of our Lord in this Gospel is not confined to the spiritual aspect of death and resurrection. It is not the gift of eternal life that belongs to the last day. Whosoever receives the Son at once receives in Him life eternal (iii. 36, vi. 33-35); but the day of the resurrection of the body witnesses the completion of that gift of eternal life which is now bestowed. In the next verse the present and the future gifts are combined.

Ver. 40. For this is the will of my Father, that every one which beholdeth the Son and believeth in him should have eternal life, and that I should raise him up at the last day. This verse is no mere repetition of the last, but differs from it in two important points. As in ver. 37, we pass from the thought of the general body of the Church to that of the individual members: in the Father's will every member is embraced. Secondly, the bond of connection with Jesus is viewed from its human rather than from its Divine side. In the last verse Jesus spoke of 'all that which' the Father had given Him; here He speaks of 'every one which beholdeth the Son and believeth in Him.' The word 'beholdeth' is

especially noteworthy, clearly including as it does an act of the will. 'Seeing' may be accidental, may be transient: he who 'beholds' is willing to stand and gaze on the object presented to his view. The word is full of instruction (comp. viii. 51, xii. 45, xiv. 17, xvii. 24).

At this point our Lord's discourse is interrupted. Hitherto He has been addressing the multitude: now, for the first time in this chapter, we are to read of 'the Jews,' *i.e.* (as we have observed in earlier chapters) adherents of the ruling party which was violently hostile to Jesus. Whether these Jews were amongst the multitude hitherto addressed in this discourse we cannot tell. If so, they had occupied no prominent place, but were lost in the crowd. But, as there is nothing to show that the paragraph which follows this verse relates to the same day, it is very possible that the Jews were not present at the miracle or when Jesus spoke of the bread of life, but were afterwards informed of His words. This latter supposition becomes more probable as we look into the circumstances. We know that on the day of the feeding of the multitude the Passover was at hand (ver. 4); and we cannot doubt that, however anxious the enemies of our Lord might be to linger near Him that they might catch Him in His talk, they would scrupulously observe the ritual of the feast. If we turn to Mark, we find two passages that distinctly speak of scribes who came down from Jerusalem to Galilee: one of these passages (iii. 22) belongs to a date somewhat earlier than that of the events related in this chapter, the other (vii. 1) comes in shortly after the narrative of Christ's walking on the sea of Galilee. The same remarks apply to the Gospel of Matthew. It seems probable, therefore, that these agents of the hostile and influential party in Jerusalem hastened back to Galilee after the Passover, to resume their machinations against the prophet whom they both hated and feared.

Ver. 41. The Jews therefore murmured concerning him, because he said, I am the bread which came down out of heaven. The 'murmuring' denotes more than that indistinct complaining to which we generally apply the word. The frequent and indignant expressions of discontent by the Israelites when journeying in the desert are expressed by the same word in the Septuagint, and this (comp. 1 Cor. x. 10) seems to have fixed its meaning in the New Testament. The Jews did not complain in the presence of Jesus, but sought to foment discontent and ill-feeling amongst those who at the time had been willing hearers of His words. It is characteristic of the spirit and motives of these enemies of our Lord that their charge against Him is put in the most captious form. As in the very similar case related in chap. v. 12, the words of nobler meaning are as far as possible left out: nothing is said about 'the bread of life' or 'the bread of God.' Indeed the bread is a mere link of connection, dropped as soon as it has served to introduce the words joined with it, to which they can (as they think) attach a charge of falsehood. On the offer of life, eternal life, they will not dwell.

Ver. 42. And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how doth he now say, I have come down out of heaven? At this time, then, it is clear that Jesus was generally regarded as Joseph's son: the calumnies which at a later period were current amongst the Jews had not yet been resorted



to. The words of the Jews do not imply that Joseph was still living, as the word rendered 'know' may simply denote their being acquainted with a fact,—they knew that Joseph and Mary were His parents. We need not wonder that they are ignorant of the miraculous conception.

Ver. 43. **Jesus answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves.** For such murmurers Jesus has only reproof. It is very strange that in our day some writers on this Gospel should have had difficulty in understanding why Jesus did not refute the objection raised by declaring the truth of the miraculous conception. Men who could so mutilate His words as practically to pervert their meaning would have been brought no nearer to conviction by such a statement, however made, but would have gathered from it material for still more malicious accusation. At first the reply of Jesus deals only with the spirit His opponents manifest.

Ver. 44. **No one can come to me except the Father which sent me shall have drawn him.** In these words He would tell them that (as their unbelief and resistance show) they have not that *special* divine teaching without which they cannot understand Him. Hence He speaks not of the 'drawing' of God, but of that of the 'Father which sent' Him. Only like can understand like. It is as the Father of the Son that God works in us that spirit in which the Son can be received by us. The 'drawing' is not precisely the same as the 'giving' of ver. 37, but describes, so to speak, the first stage of the 'giving'; he that 'hath been drawn' by the Father is he that is given to the Son.—**And I will raise him up at the last day.** As the initiative of salvation belongs to the Father, the completion is the work of the Son. The Father draws and entrusts; the Son receives, keeps, imparts life, until the glorious consummation, the final resurrection. Between these two extreme terms 'draw' and 'raise up' is included all the development of the spiritual life (Godet).

Ver. 45. **It is written in the prophets, And they shall all be taught of God.** Jesus confirms His word by a testimony from the Old Testament, not now taken from the Law (comp. ver. 31), but from the Prophets. The use of the plural 'prophets' has been thought to prove that the reference does not belong to any one passage; and we may certainly say that an inclusive expression like this may have been used designedly, as implying that there are many such promises, and that this tone of promise is characteristic of the book of the Prophets. Still the word which introduces the quotation, 'And,' a word quite needless for the Speaker's purpose, shows conclusively that the quotation is direct. There can be no doubt that the words are taken from Isa. liv. 13, with one or two slight alterations. They describe the great and general privilege of Messianic times. The retention of the words 'thy children' (addressed to Jerusalem in Isa. liv. 13) might have seemed to limit the promise, which, belonging to the 'latter days,' is really free from all such limitations. It has been suggested (by Godet) that the synagogue lesson for the day (see ver. 59) may have included these very words (comp. Luke iv. 17-21). Be this as it may (and there is no improbability in the conjecture), the quotation was well known, and carries out and illustrates the words of ver. 44. The truth of that verse is set in a new light,—presented on its human rather than on its Divine

side. The 'drawing' is a 'teaching': he that hath been drawn by the Father, is he that hath truly received the teaching of the Father.—**Every one that hath heard from the Father, and hath learned, cometh unto me.** Such true reception of the teaching is emphatically described in these words. Two stages in human experience, implied in the successful result of teaching, are separated from each other. All who hear may also learn, but many hear who will not heed, and therefore cannot learn; just as there are many who see the Son but will not remain to 'behold the Son' and to 'believe in Him' (ver. 40). These varied expressions illustrate one another with wonderful beauty and power. Not one allows us to think of compulsion or the forcing of man's will: all with one voice give glory to the Father as the source of every impulse towards the light and the life. The variety of expressions used by Jesus in the inculcation of this truth, so characteristic of the present chapter, may well remind us of the variety of the means employed by the Father in the prosecution of the work. Thus the 'drawing' may present to our thought especially an inward influence; the 'teaching' may suggest the application of Scripture truth; whilst the 'giving' brings into view the final act of the Father when the design of His love has been fulfilled. But while each term may lead us to think most of one aspect of the Father's work, every term really includes all its aspects and denotes the whole work.

Ver. 46. **Not that any one hath seen the Father, save he which is from God, he hath seen the Father.** The words just spoken, 'he that hath heard from the Father,' might be understood to point to a direct communication: this however would imply a close relation to the Father such as is possessed by One alone, who hath 'seen the Father.' His saying that all who come to Him have first 'heard from the Father' might lead His hearers to infer that the descent out of heaven likewise implied nothing more than could be said of all. Such an inference this verse is intended to preclude. If they would really be 'taught' of the Father it can only be through Him.

Ver. 47. **Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth hath eternal life.** In the preceding verses Jesus has rebuked the murmuring of the Jews. They had not opened their hearts to the Father's teaching, or their difficulty would have disappeared. He now returns to the truths out of which His foes had drawn their indictment against His truthfulness. First, however, He brings into relief those sayings which they had passed over entirely. The solemn formula, 'Verily, verily, I say unto you,' to be followed by a higher at ver. 53, at once marks the transition and shows the importance of the truth declared. In speaking to the multitude (ver. 26) His first words had related to eternal life, and to the paramount necessity of faith (ver. 29). So here also; but the assertion is made in the briefest possible form. Even the object of the faith is left unexpressed, that the thought may entirely rest on the state of faith itself: the believer in the very act and condition of faith has eternal life. It is not often that Jesus speaks thus, omitting the words 'in me' or 'in the Son'; but there could be no real ambiguity in the present instance, and He desires to express in the most forcible manner the state of mind which formed the strongest possible contrast to that of the Jews.



Ver. 48. **I am the bread of life.** Having prepared the way by the declaration of the necessity of faith, He reaffirms what (in ver. 35) He had said of Himself. He is the bread which contains life in itself, and which therefore can give and does give life to all who receive and assimilate it.—It is interesting to observe, at a point where the discourse is really higher than it was before, a *shortening* of the formula employed, similar to that already met by us in i. 29 and 36 (see note on i. 35, 36).

Ver. 49. **Your fathers did eat the manna in the wilderness, and died.** No other bread has given life eternal. Even the manna, the bread given out of heaven, did not bestow life on their fathers, who (as the people themselves had said) ate the manna in the wilderness. It seems very probable that the addition 'in the wilderness' is more than a mere repetition of the words of ver. 31. It recalls Num. xiv. 35, Ps. xcv. 8-11, and other passages in which 'the wilderness' is specially mentioned as the scene of disobedience and of death; and thus the fathers, who (Deut. i. 32) 'did not believe the Lord' and died, are contrasted with the believer who 'hath eternal life' (ver. 47).

Ver. 50. **This is the bread which cometh down out of heaven, that any one may eat thereof, and not die.** The 'bread that cometh down out of heaven' (repeated from ver. 33) is of such a nature, and has such an object, that one may eat of it and not die. We are not to press too much our Lord's use of 'one' or 'any one' in this verse; but we may at least say that His studious avoidance of every word of limitation points once more to the unbounded offer of life, the offer to 'the world' (ver. 33). When verses 49 and 50 are compared, a difficulty presents itself. It may be said that the antithesis is not complete, for is not *death* used in two different senses? The fathers *died* in the wilderness: he that eateth of the true bread shall not *die*. There is exactly the same twofold use of the word in chap. xi. 26 (see the note on that verse). It is sufficient here to say that in neither verse is the meaning as simple as the objection supposes. In ver. 49 we must certainly recognise a partial reference to death as a punishment of sin, and by consequence to that moral death which even in this world must ever accompany sin. In ver. 50 again physical death may seem to be excluded, but we shall see that John elsewhere regards the believer as freed (in a certain sense) even from this, so entirely has death for him changed its character,—so complete is the deliverance granted by his Lord.

Ver. 51. **I am the living bread which came down out of heaven.** Once more Jesus declares that the bread of which He has spoken is Himself; but the assertion is expressed in words that differ significantly from those before employed. For 'the bread of life' He says now 'the living bread:' for 'cometh down,' an expression which might seem a mere figure denoting heavenly origin, He says 'came down,' speaking of an actual historical descent out of heaven. The former change especially is important. He has been speaking of the bread as given, but is about to declare Himself to be the Giver: therefore He says that He is the living bread, that can give itself, and with itself its inherent life. There was nothing in the 'bread of life' that would necessarily suggest more than means and instrument. If the tree of life in Paradise bestowed immortality on man, it was but by

instrumental efficacy. 'The living bread' is a thought absolutely unique, and the words compel the minds of the hearers to rest on the person of the Speaker, who in the possession of this life, and not as the precious but lifeless manna, descended out of heaven.—**If any one shall have eaten of this bread, he shall live for ever.** These words partly repeat and partly extend those of the preceding verse. There the nature and object of the bread are given; here the assurance that every one who makes trial of the promise shall certainly find it fulfilled to him in the gift of a life that lasts for ever.—**And moreover the bread that I will give is my flesh, for the life of the world.** The personal significance of the preceding words is now made even more direct, and the meaning intended cannot probably be mistaken. He gives; the bread He gives is His flesh; the gift is for the life of the world. The questions which these words have raised will be best considered in connection with our Lord's own comment in the following verses.

Ver. 52. **The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat?** As before, the Jews take hold of those words which are most susceptible of a merely material sense. Every word that points to a spiritual meaning they ignore; but in doing so they themselves give evidence of the clearness with which our Lord had now shown that His intention had been to fix the whole thought of His hearers on Himself, and not on His gifts. The contention of the Jews became violent as they talked of the words of Jesus: the Evangelist's expression, literally taken, points to 'fighting' rather than strife (comp. Acts vii. 26; 2 Tim. ii. 24; Jas. iv. 2).

Vers. 53, 54, 55. **Jesus therefore said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye have eaten the flesh of the Son of man, and drunk his blood, ye have not life in yourselves. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.** As to the general meaning of this important passage there can be little or no doubt. There are some new expressions, but on the whole the imagery agrees with that employed in the earlier part of the chapter, and the blessings offered by Jesus are described again in identical language. Here, as before, life, eternal life, is promised; again 'eating' is the figure which describes the mode of receiving life; as in vers. 35, 48, and 51, Jesus identifies Himself with that which when eaten gives life; and, as in ver. 44 (compare vers. 39 and 40), He promises that He will raise up at the last day every one who has thus received eternal life. The agreement then between these verses and the earlier part of the discourse is so marked that there can be no change in the general sense: all the expressions in previous verses in which figure is wholly or partially set aside may be brought in here also to elucidate the meaning. Our Lord therefore still teaches in regard to all who come to Him, who believe in Him, who are intimately joined to Him in the union of faith and, receiving all from Him, may be said to appropriate to themselves Himself, and to feed on Him,—that these and these alone have eternal life. There is nothing here that alters this foundation truth. The phraseology of these verses (and ver. 51) is new in the following respects: (1) Instead of the

one metaphor of eating we have two, 'eating' and 'drinking'; (2) The figure of bread is dropped, giving place to 'flesh,' the flesh of the Son of man, which flesh is given by Him for the life of the world. (3) For the first time Jesus makes mention of His 'blood,'—the drinking of this blood gives life. The introduction of the second metaphor, 'drinking,' at once recalls ver. 35, where 'thirst' is as suddenly brought in. As in that verse, so here, one purpose answered is the more complete realisation of a feast: the Paschal meal is always present in the symbols of this chapter. Whether this is to be taken as the only purpose will depend on the answer given to other questions which must now be asked. Does Jesus, in speaking of His flesh given for the life of the world, expressly refer to His death, His atoning death? Is it in order to point more clearly to that truth that He here brings in the mention of His blood? Are we to understand that there is a strict and real difference between the things signified by eating His flesh and drinking His blood? The last question may easily be answered: there is certainly no such difference. In ver. 35 there is a very beautiful and rapid change of aspect, but no substantial change of thought: coming to Christ is believing in Him, and the result is the satisfaction of every want, whether represented as hunger or as thirst. When the 'flesh' is first mentioned (ver. 51) it stands alone, as the Saviour's gift for the life of the world; and below (ver. 57) 'eating' alone is spoken of, yet the result is life. As a rule, indeed, flesh is contrasted with blood in biblical language, and the two are joined together to express the physical being of man; but it is not uncommon to find flesh used by itself in this sense. Thus in the first chapter of this Gospel we read that 'the Word was made flesh,' whereas in Heb. ii. 14 we are taught that the Son took part in flesh and blood. It is therefore quite in accordance with the usage of Scripture that the same idea should be expressed now by the one term and now by the two combined; and the context (as we have seen) shows that this is the case here. The two expressions of these verses are thus substantially equivalent to the one expression of ver. 57. But it does not follow from this that our Lord had no special motive for thus varying His language. The cardinal thought is most simply expressed in ver. 57, 'he that eateth me;' and we may well believe that He would have so spoken in these verses also had He not intended to suggest special thoughts by the use of other words. In asking now what these special thoughts are, it is scarcely possible for us, in the light of events that followed, to dissociate the last clause of ver. 51 from the thought of death, or the mention of 'the blood' of the Son of man from the thought of the blood shed upon the cross. The words, indeed, would not at that time suggest such thoughts: they were rather a secret prophecy, like the mysterious sayings of chap. ii. 19 ('Destroy this Temple:') and chap. iii. 14 ('even so must the Son of man be lifted up'), and that saying so often repeated in the earlier Gospels, the command to 'take up' and to 'bear' 'the cross.' But this Gospel shows most plainly that the end was ever present to Jesus from the very beginning; and many of His words can only receive their proper interpretation by the application of this principle. There is another consideration which removes all doubt in this place, if the general view which has

been taken of the chapter is correct. The figurative acts and language have been suggested by the Paschal meal which has just been (or is just about to be) celebrated in Jerusalem. The later chapters of the Gospel set forth Jesus as the fulfilment of the Passover, Jesus on the cross as the antitype and reality of the Paschal meal. This chapter in pointing to the type points continually to the fulfilment; but the Paschal lamb died, and the death of Jesus must therefore be regarded as part of the thought before us. Nor would it be safe to deny that mention of the blood here may even be connected, as some have supposed, with the command that the blood of the Paschal lamb should be sprinkled on the dwellings of the Israelites. So many are the links between symbol and reality which the Evangelist apprehends both in his own teaching and in the discourses recorded by him, that it is less hazardous to admit than to deny the possibility of such a connection. But even then the thought of blood shed upon the cross must not be kept separate and distinct from all else that Jesus was and did. The central thought of the chapter is undoubtedly that of a meal, a feast, an experimental reception of a living Christ which is symbolized by 'eating' and 'drinking;' and to that the whole interpretation must be subordinated. It cannot therefore be Jesus in His death, looked at as a distinct and separate act, that is before us in the mention of the blood. It must still be Jesus in the whole of His manifestation of Himself, living, dying, glorified; so that, if we may so speak, the death is to be viewed only as a pervading element of the life, only as one of the characteristics of that Christ who, not as divided but in all the combined elements of His humiliation and His glory, is from first to last the object of our faith and the satisfaction of our need. The main point, in short, to be kept in view is this, that we are here dealing with the actual nourishment, with the sustenance, with the *life* of the soul; with the believer, not as having only certain relations altered in which he stands to God, but as in fellowship and communion of spirit with Him in whom he believes. To maintain by faith that fellowship with Jesus *in all that He was*, is to eat His flesh and to drink His blood.

It may be accepted as an additional proof of the correctness of what has been said, if we observe that the very same blessings now connected with eating the flesh and drinking the blood of Jesus have been already connected with 'coming to Him,' with 'believing in Him,' and with 'beholding Him.' Thus, for the first of these, comp. vers. 35 and 55; for the second, vers. 47 and 54; for the third, vers. 40 and 54. It is clear, therefore, that the spiritual appropriation of the life and death of Jesus is described under all the different figures of this passage. All tell us of communion, of fellowship, of a feast,—of the Lamb of God not only as the Paschal sacrifice, but as the Paschal feast.

The question now considered leads at once to another. What is the relation of these verses and this whole discourse to the sacrament of the Lord's Supper? Many have held that the doctrine of the sacrament (not yet instituted, but present to the Redeemer's mind) is the very substance of this chapter; whilst others have denied that there is any connection whatever between the two. We can adopt neither of these extreme views. On the one hand, the words of Jesus in this discourse can belong to no rite or ordinance, however exalted

and however precious to His people. The act of which He speaks is continuous, not occasional, —spiritual, not external; every term that He employs is a symbol of trust in Him. But on the other hand, if alike in this chapter and in the records of the Last Supper the Paschal meal is presented to our thought, and if John specially connects this feast with the death of Christ, whilst all the other Evangelists bring into relief the relation of the Last Supper to the same death, it is impossible to say that the sacrament is altogether alien to this discourse. The relation of the Lord's Supper to the teaching of this chapter is very nearly the same as the relation of Christian baptism to our Lord's discourse to Nicodemus (see note on chap. iii. 5). In neither case is the sacrament *as such* brought before us; in both we must certainly recognise the presence of its fundamental idea. This discourse is occupied with that lasting, continuous act of which afterwards the sacrament of the Lord's Supper was made a symbol; and the sacrament is still a symbol of the unchanging truth so fully set forth in this discourse,—the believer's union with his Lord, his complete dependence upon Him for life, his continued appropriation by faith of His very self, his feeding on Him, living on Him, his experience that Jesus in giving Himself satisfies every want of the soul.

There is not much in the particular expressions of these three verses that calls for further remark. It will be observed that there are two links connecting them with our Lord's first address to the multitude (ver. 26): He again speaks of the 'Son of man,' and the words 'food indeed' (literally 'true eating') at once recall 'the eating that abideth.' One expression in ver. 53 is very forcible, 'Ye have not life in yourselves,' implying, as it does, that they who have so eaten and drunk have life in themselves. These are words which our Lord could not use without intending a special emphasis (comp. chap. v. 26): so complete is the believer's appropriation of the Son, who hath life in Himself, that the same exalted language may be used of the believer also, whilst he abides in fellowship with his Lord. Then he has life *in* himself, but not *of* himself. This fellowship is the substance of the next verse.

Ver. 56. *He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood abideth in me, and I in him.* The fellowship consists in this, that the believer abides in the Life, and that He who is the Life abides in the believer. Note that here it is not 'hath eaten;' the 'abiding' is dependent on the continuance of the appropriating act.

Ver. 57. *The living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father; so he that eateth me, he also shall live because of me.* He that sent the Son into the world is the living Father, —the Being who is eternally and absolutely the Living One. The Son lives because the Father lives. This reception of life (see chap. v. 26) is the characteristic of the Son. So, with a relation to the Son similar to the Son's relation to the Father, the believer who receives and appropriates the Son lives because the Son, who is Life, abides in him. This is the climax of the whole discourse: for even more exalted language expressive of the same truth, that the relation between Jesus and His own has its pattern in the relation between the Father and the Son, see chap. xvii. 21, 23.

Ver. 58. *This is that bread which came down out of heaven.* Here Jesus returns to the first theme. Since He has now set forth all that the true bread gives, the contrast with the manna is complete. 'This'—of this nature, such as I have described it to you—'is the bread that came down out of heaven.' These last words illustrate the first clause of ver. 57, 'the living Father sent me.' —Not as your fathers did eat and died: he that eateth this bread shall live for ever. The rest of the verse is in the main a forcible repetition of vers. 49, 50.

Ver. 59. *These things said he, as he was teaching in a synagogue in Capernaum.* These words not only give information as to the place in which the discourse (probably vers. 41-58; see note on ver. 40) was delivered, but also show the boldness with which Jesus declared truths so new and so surprising to His hearers. He spoke thus in public teaching (comp. chap. xviii. 20), and that too in the presence of His powerful enemies, and in the place where their influence was greatest.

Ver. 60. *Many therefore of his disciples when they heard this said, This is an hard saying; who can hear him?* The word 'disciples' is here used in a wide sense, including many more than the Twelve, and many who had never risen to a high and pure faith. The 'saying' can only be that of the preceding verses (53-57), and its hardness consisted in the fact that it pointed out one only way to life,—eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Son of man. These words the disciples did not spiritually comprehend, and therefore they were repelled by them.

Ver. 61. *But Jesus, knowing in himself that his disciples murmured concerning this, said unto them, Doth this make you to stumble?* He knew their thoughts, and because they are disciples, not Jews bent on opposing Him, He seeks to help them.

Ver. 62. *What then if ye behold the Son of man ascending where he was before?* The meaning of this ascent is surely clear in itself; but if it were not, the mention of a past descent (vers. 41, 51, 58) would remove all doubt. Our Lord certainly refers to His ascension into heaven. He would say: 'Is the word that speaks of the descent from heaven, of the living bread that alone can give life, of the Son's descent from heaven to give His flesh and His blood that the world may eat and drink and live, a stumbling-block to you? If, when I am here before you, you cannot understand what is meant by eating my flesh and drinking my blood,—cannot apprehend the spiritual meaning which such words must bear,—how much more will you, in this your carnal apprehension of what I say, be made to stumble if you should see me ascending where I was before, to be no longer upon earth at all!' As the necessity of eating His flesh must continue, what will they think then? Then the sense they have put upon His words will indeed wholly break down: then at last they may come to see that the words can only be spiritually understood.

Ver. 63. *It is the spirit that maketh to live; the flesh profiteth nothing.* Jesus has spoken of 'giving life,' of the 'eating of His flesh,' as the means of gaining eternal life. In all this He has not the flesh but the spirit in view,—not the material reception of the flesh by the flesh, but

the appropriation of His spirit by the spirit of man. Such spiritual union of the believer with Him alone 'maketh to live': the flesh in itself is profitless for such an end.—The words that I have spoken unto you, they are spirit, and they are life. The word 'I' is emphatic, as it repeatedly has been in this discourse. The emphasis which Jesus here and elsewhere lays upon His sayings is very remarkable. He is the Word, the expression of the Father's nature and will; His sayings are to man the expression of Himself. The words or sayings just spoken to these disciples are spirit and are life. This is their essential nature. They may be carnalised, wrongly understood, wilfully perverted; but wherever they find an entrance they manifest their true nature. They bring into the receptive heart not the flesh but the spirit of the Son of man, and thus the man, in the true sense eating the flesh of the Son of man, has life. His words received by faith bring Himself. Thus He can in two verses almost consecutive (chap. xv. 4, 7) say, 'Abide in me, and I in you,' and 'If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you.'

Ver. 64. But there are some of you that believe not. Even of these who had heard the last words, so mercifully spoken for the removal of their difficulties, there were some who continued in unbelief.—For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who it was that would betray him. Another remarkable declaration by the Evangelist of the Saviour's penetrating discernment of all hearts (compare chap. ii. 24, 25), and of His knowledge from the very beginning what would be the end of His earthly course. The words seem to imply that the germ of the traitor-spirit was already in the heart of Judas, who, like many others, loved rather the glory and honour which Jesus set aside (vers. 14, 15) than the spirit and the life of His words.

Ver. 65. And he said, For this cause have I said unto you, that no one can come unto me, except it have been given unto him of the Father. They had seemed genuine disciples, but His words had been to them a stumbling-block and had not brought life. They had not really come to Him: they had not received from the Father the gift of 'coming unto' Jesus, but the failure had been by their own fault. Having resisted the drawing of the Father, they had lacked the due preparation of heart for receiving the words of Jesus (see the notes on vers. 37 and 44).

Ver. 66. Upon this many of his disciples went back, and walked no longer with him. Another sad reflection, as in ver. 64: the Evangelist cannot but record the repelling influence which the light exerted on those who were not of the light. These disciples seemed to have left all that they might be followers of Christ, but now they return to the homes and the occupations they had forsaken. (The usual rendering 'walked no more' is in itself perfectly correct, but may be possibly understood in the sense of 'never more,' a sense certainly not designed.)

Ver. 67. Jesus therefore said unto the twelve, Would ye also go? In contrast with the desertion of many is the strengthened faith of those who, being of the light, are attracted by the light. The 'Twelve' are here mentioned by John for the first time.

Vers. 68, 69. Simon Peter answered him. In accordance with the earlier records Peter stands forth as the spokesman of the Twelve, and in answer to the question of Jesus makes a confession of their faith.—Lord, to whom shall we go away? thou hast words of eternal life. (Ver. 69) And we have believed, and we know that thou art the Holy One of God. The confession consists of three parts—(1) 'Thou hast words of eternal life' (see ver. 63); (2) 'And we have believed' (in contrast with ver. 64, 'there are of you some that believe not'); (3) 'And we know,' etc. These disciples have answered the revelation of Jesus by the faith which it demands; and now they 'know' with the practical knowledge of experience that Jesus is the Sent of God. The expression which Peter uses is 'the Holy One of God.' A similar phrase occurs in Ps. cvi. 16 in regard to Aaron, who is called 'the holy one of Jehovah.' In the case of the human priest and in that of his antitype our Lord, the general meaning is the same,—the *consecrated one* of God, or, in other words, He whom the Father sealed, He whom God has sent. The meaning of the word used here, 'holy,' must receive special consideration in other passages: see the notes on x. 36, xvii. 17. It is hardly necessary to say that the confession of Peter does not seem to be the same as that related in Matt. xvi.

Ver. 70. Jesus answered them, Did not I choose you the twelve? and one of you is a devil. Alas! even in this small circle there is an element that the light attracts not but repels. In good faith Peter had spoken of all his brethren, when he said, 'we have believed.' He knew not, and probably Judas himself knew not, to whom Jesus referred. The germ of the future crime and that alone as yet existed. But from the beginning Jesus knew all. Amongst the disciples He knew who would desert Him: in this inner circle He knew who would show himself a traitor—'a devil.' Many weaker interpretations, but all baseless, have been given of this word. The traitor will do his work at the instigation of the Evil One, and animated by his spirit: his work will be the work of the devil: he himself in doing it will be the associate of Satan: nay, as we shall see, he will be more.

Ver. 71. Now he spake of Judas the son of Simon Iscariot. Here we meet for the first time in this Gospel with the name Iscariot; and it will be observed that (as in xiii. 26) it is connected not with the name of Judas (as in xii. 4, xiii. 2, xiv. 22) but with that of his father. In all probability the word signifies 'man of Kerioth,' a town in the tribe of Judah (see Josh. xv. 25). Apparently Judas was the only apostle not of Galilee, and the peculiarity of his name (identical with Judah and 'the Jews') is certainly not overlooked by the Evangelist. Nay, more, not only is Judas of Kerioth, that town of Judah and the Jews, his father is so too. The double link of connection seems to deepen the thought.—For he it was that was about to betray him—one of the twelve. Judas was not yet the traitor; 'was about to' expresses only the futurity of the event; but how much is the criminality of the germ already springing up in his heart heightened by the closing remark, in which we see at once the anger and the pathos of the Evangelist,—'being one of the Twelve'!

## CHAPTER VII. 1-13.

*Jesus at the Feast of Tabernacles.*

- 1 **A**FTER<sup>1</sup> these things Jesus walked in Galilee: for he  
 2 would not walk in Jewry,<sup>2</sup> <sup>a</sup> because the Jews sought to  
 3 kill him. Now <sup>b</sup> the Jews' feast of 'tabernacles' <sup>c</sup> was at hand.  
 4 His brethren therefore said unto him, Depart hence, and go  
 5 into Judea, that thy disciples also may see the <sup>d</sup> works that  
 6 thou doest. For *there is* <sup>e</sup> no man <sup>f</sup> that <sup>g</sup> doeth any thing in  
 7 secret, and he <sup>h</sup> himself seeketh to be known openly.<sup>9</sup> If thou  
 8 do <sup>i</sup> these things, shew <sup>j</sup> thyself to the world. For <sup>k</sup> neither <sup>l</sup>  
 9 did his brethren believe in him. Then Jesus said <sup>m</sup> unto them,  
 10 My time is not yet come:<sup>14</sup> but your time is always ready.  
 11 The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I  
 12 testify of it,<sup>15</sup> that <sup>n</sup> the works thereof are evil.<sup>16</sup> Go ye up  
 13 unto this <sup>o</sup> feast: I go not up yet unto this feast; for <sup>p</sup> my  
 14 time is not yet full come.<sup>19</sup> When <sup>q</sup> he had said these  
 15 words <sup>r</sup> unto them, he abode *still* in Galilee.
- 16 But <sup>s</sup> when his brethren were gone up,<sup>22</sup> then went he also  
 17 up unto the feast,<sup>24</sup> not openly,<sup>25</sup> but as it were <sup>t</sup> in secret.
- 18 Then the Jews <sup>u</sup> sought him at the feast, and said, Where is  
 19 he? And there was much murmuring among the people <sup>v</sup>  
 20 concerning him: <sup>w</sup> for <sup>x</sup> some said, He is a good man: others <sup>y</sup>  
 21 said. Nay; but he deceiveth the people.<sup>31</sup> Howbeit no man  
 22 spake openly of <sup>z</sup> him <sup>aa</sup> for <sup>ab</sup> fear of the Jews.
- 1 And after <sup>2</sup> Judea <sup>3</sup> And the feast of the Jews, the feast of tabernacles,  
 4 may behold thy <sup>5</sup> omit there is <sup>6</sup> one <sup>7</sup> omit that  
 8 omit he <sup>9</sup> to be in boldness <sup>10</sup> doest <sup>11</sup> manifest  
 12 not even <sup>13</sup> Jesus therefore saith <sup>14</sup> present  
 15 I bear witness concerning it <sup>16</sup> that its works are wicked <sup>17</sup> the  
 18 because <sup>19</sup> not yet fulfilled <sup>20</sup> And when <sup>21</sup> things  
 22 And <sup>23</sup> had gone up unto the feast <sup>24</sup> omit unto the feast  
 25 manifestly <sup>26</sup> omit it were <sup>27</sup> The Jews therefore  
 28 multitudes <sup>29</sup> omit for <sup>30</sup> but others  
 31 leadeth astray the multitude <sup>32</sup> boldly concerning <sup>33</sup> because of the

CONTENTS. The same line of thought as that which we have found in the two previous chapters is continued in that before us. He who is the Fulfiller of the Sabbath and of the Passover is the Fulfiller also of the great feast in which the festivals of the Jewish year culminated, — that of Tabernacles. The first section of the chapter gives an account of the circumstances in which Jesus went up to this feast, the subordinate parts being—(1) vers. 1-9, Jesus declines to go up to it at the request of His brethren, for He can act only at the suggestion of His heavenly Father's will; (2) vers. 10-13, He goes up when He sees that the hour for doing so is come.

Ver. 1. And after these things Jesus walked

in Galilee: for he would not walk in Judea, because the Jews sought to kill him. The events of chap. vi. belonged to the period of the Passover; chap. vii. is occupied with the feast of Tabernacles. The interval covered by the brief description of this verse, therefore, is about six months. During that time Jesus 'was walking in Galilee,' for in Judea His enemies 'were seeking to kill Him.' As it is John himself who gives the notes of time from which we learn the length of this period, we have here another illustration of the selective principle on which his Gospel is composed. The ministry in Galilee is in the main passed over, partly, no doubt, because the Evangelist well knew that the types of Gospel teaching that were most widely current chiefly

presented the Saviour's work in Galilee: partly, because this work was less closely connected with his purpose to bring out with clearness the progress and development of the conflict between Jesus and the representatives of the Jewish people. The period before us receives a lengthened notice in two of the earlier Gospels. We may, with great probability, refer to it four chapters in Matthew (xv.-xviii.), three in Mark (vii.-ix.), besides half of the ninth chapter in Luke. To it, therefore, belong our Lord's visits to the borders of Tyre and Sidon, the miracles wrought for the Syrophenician woman and for the deaf and dumb man in Decapolis, the feeding of the four thousand, Peter's second confession followed by our Lord's announcement of His approaching sufferings and death, the Transfiguration, together with other miracles and discourses. The principal outward characteristics of this portion of our Lord's public ministry are the wider range of His travels and the comparative privacy which He seems usually to have maintained: the progress in the training of the Twelve, which is most observable, we may also in great measure connect with the retirement thus sought by their Master.

**Ver. 2. And the feast of the Jews, the feast of tabernacles, was at hand.** This annual festival, the last of the three at which the men of Israel were required to present themselves before the Lord in Jerusalem, began on the 15th of Tizri, that is, either late in September or early in October. It had a twofold significance, being at once a harvest festival and a historical memorial of the earliest days of the nation. At the 'feast of Ingathering' (Ex. xxiii. 16) the people gave thanks for the harvest, now safely gathered in: the 'feast of Tabernacles,' during the seven days of which they dwelt in booths or huts, recalled the years which their fathers spent in the desert (Lev. xxiii. 39-43). The mode in which the feast was celebrated must be noticed in connection with later verses (see note on ver. 38): here we need only add that this festival, spoken of by Josephus as 'the holiest and greatest' of all, was a season of the most lively rejoicing (see Neh. viii. 16-18), and was associated at once with the most precious recollections of the past and the most sacred hopes for the future of the nation. In particular, as we shall see more fully hereafter, the feast had come to be regarded as the type and emblem of the glory of the latter day, when the Spirit of God should be poured out like floods upon the ground (Isa. xxxv.). On the expression 'feast of the Jews,' see the notes on chap. ii. 13, vi. 4. To what extent the joyous and holy feast of the Lord could be perverted by the malice and hatred of 'the Jews' this chapter will clearly show.

**Ver. 3. His brethren therefore said unto him, Depart hence, and go into Judea, that thy disciples also may behold thy works that thou doest.** His brothers, in thus urging Him to depart into Judea, have distinctly in mind (as appears from ver. 8) the approaching feast and the concourse of people which would soon be assembling in Jerusalem. It is important to keep this in mind if we would understand the position occupied by the brothers of Jesus. They were not believers in Him (ver. 5), that is, they did not accept Him as the Messiah; in their own words they separated themselves from the number of His disciples (ver. 3); and as yet they were accounted by Him as belonging to 'the world'

(w r. 7). On the other hand, there is no trace of disbelief or disparagement of His works; for the words, 'Thy works that Thou doest,' were not spoken in irony; and 'if Thou doest' (ver. 4) need not express the slightest doubt. To these 'brethren,' then, brought up in the prevalent Messianic belief, there appeared an inconsistency between the loftiness of His claims and the comparatively limited display of what He offered as His credentials; the reserve with which He manifested His powers went far with them towards destroying the impression made by His miracles. But one of the chief festivals was now at hand. Neither at the Passover of this year nor at the feast of Weeks (Pentecost) had He gone up to Jerusalem: why should He avoid publicity, and appear to shun that decisive testing of His claims which was possible in Jerusalem alone. By 'Thy disciples,' the brethren of Jesus do not simply mean 'Thy disciples in Judea.' In this case the word 'there' must have been inserted, as bearing the chief emphasis of the sentence. As we have just seen, the recent labours of Jesus in northern Galilee had been marked by privacy. For the most part the Twelve only had witnessed His works; at times some even of these had been excluded. At the feast the whole body of His disciples would be gathered together, and what might be done in Jerusalem would be conspicuous to all.—On the 'brothers' of the Lord see the note on chap. ii. 12; after this paragraph (vers. 3, 5, 10), they are not mentioned again in this Gospel; in chap. xx. 17 the words have a different meaning.

**Ver. 4. For no one doeth any thing in secret, and himself seeketh to be in boldness.** 'To be in boldness' may seem a singular expression; the Greek words, however, will not admit of the rendering 'to be known openly;' and it is clear that the form of the phrase is chosen so as to be in correspondence with what precedes, 'doeth anything in secret.' The Greek word rendered 'boldness' occurs nine times in this Gospel, four times in John's First Epistle, and eighteen times in the rest of the New Testament. In every case it denotes either boldness, as opposed to fear or caution (see vers. 13, 26, xi. 54, xviii. 20), or plainness of language as opposed to reserve (chap. x. 24, xi. 14, xvi. 25, 29); here the meaning is 'to take a bold position.' Working miracles in secret and a bold claim of personal dignity and office are, in the view of these men, things incompatible with one another.—**If thou doest these things, manifest thyself to the world.** These words are very remarkable. The brothers would use them as meaning 'to all men,' i.e. 'to all Israel' gathered together at the feast (comp. chap. xii. 19); but we cannot doubt that the Evangelist sees here the language of unconscious prophecy, such as appears in many other places of this Gospel, and in one case at least (chap. xi. 51) is expressly noted by himself. The words are now uttered with a true instinct; they will be fulfilled in their widest sense.

**Ver. 5. For not even did his brethren believe in him.** This verse seems to afford an unanswerable argument against those who hold that amongst these 'brothers' of our Lord were included two or three of the twelve apostles. How long this unbelief lasted we cannot tell: the words of Paul in 1 Cor. xv. 7, 'Then He appeared to James,' make it very probable that it was by our Lord's resurrec-

tion from the dead that the brothers were led to a true belief in that Divine mission which, in spite of the earlier miracles they had witnessed, they had refused to accept.

Ver. 6. *Jesus therefore saith unto them, My time is not yet present, but your time is always ready.* The answer is remarkably akin to that addressed to His mother in chap. ii. 4. Very different, probably, were the mother and the brethren in their measure of faith and in the motive of their words; but in each case there betrayed itself a conviction that Jesus might be influenced by human counsel in the manifestations of Himself. Here as there His time was at hand, but not yet 'present'; and until the moment appointed by the Father He whose will is one with that of the Father can do nothing. Such limitation did not apply to His brethren; they were not separated from the 'world,' and with that world they might at any time associate.

Ver. 7. *The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I bear witness concerning it, that its works are wicked.* Jesus takes up the word which they had used; but in His mouth it has a depth of solemn meaning of which they knew nothing. With them the world was the whole body of Israelites, with whom lay the acceptance or rejection of His claims; with Him the world was a hostile power, to which indeed He will manifest Himself, but which He has come to subdue. Jesus and His brothers stand in opposite relations to the world,—they at one with it, He the Reprover of its wicked works. This difference of relation makes necessary a difference of action: they cannot understand, much less can they guide, His course.

Ver. 8. *Go ye up unto the feast: I go not up yet unto this feast, because my time is not yet fulfilled.* The words 'not yet' imply an intention of attending the festival, though as yet the appointed time had not come. The interval before it comes may be of the shortest, but the 'not yet' lasts till the 'now' comes, and then the obedience must be instant and complete. It is well known that this verse furnished Porphyry, the assailant of Christianity in the third century, with one of his arguments. In his Greek text of the Gospel the reading was, 'I go not up unto' (the word 'yet' being absent), and upon this Porphyry founded an accusation of fickleness and change of purpose.

Ver. 9. *And when he had said these things unto them he abode still in Galilee.* How long, we are not informed. As, however, it would seem that His brothers were on the point of setting out for Jerusalem, to be present at the beginning of the festival, and as He Himself was teaching in the temple when the sacred week had half expired (ver. 14), the interval spent in Galilee can hardly have been more than two or three days.

Ver. 10. *And when his brethren had gone up unto the feast, then went he also up, not manifestly but as in secret.* We must not sever 'manifestly' from 'manifest thyself,' in ver. 4. Had Jesus joined any festal band, it would have been impossible (without an express miracle) to restrain the impetuous zeal of Galilean pilgrims, of whom very many had witnessed His 'signs,' and listened to His words. To have gone up publicly would have been to 'manifest Himself to the world.' At the next great feast, the Passover

of the following year, He did enter the holy city in triumph, thus proclaimed King of Israel by the rejoicing multitudes. For this, however, the time was not yet come. It is very probable that this journey must be identified with that related in Luke ix. 51 sqq. The privacy here spoken of has been thought inconsistent with Luke's statement that Jesus at that time travelled through Samaria with His disciples, 'sending messengers before him' (Luke ix. 52). But the divergence is only apparent. Jesus went up 'in secret,' in that He avoided the train of Galilean pilgrims, who may have reached Jerusalem before He set out from Galilee; besides, it is probable that the route through Samaria, though not altogether avoided by the festal companies (as we know from Josephus), would be more rarely taken. The sending of messengers implies no publicity; for such a company as this, composed of Jesus and His disciples, such a precaution might well be essential.

Ver. 11. *The Jews therefore sought him at the feast, and said, Where is he?* Their expectation that He would be present at this festival may have rested on no other ground than the national usage, to which Jesus had occasionally conformed even during His public ministry. Possibly His words (ver. 8) 'I go not up yet' may have become known to the Galilean multitude, and hence to the Jews. Verses 1 and 13 seem to leave very little doubt that the 'seeking' was of a hostile character. By 'the Jews,' the Evangelist still means the ruling class, those whom worldliness and self-seeking had long since turned into the declared enemies of Jesus.

Ver. 12. *And there was much murmuring among the multitudes concerning him. Some said, He is a good man: but others said, Nay, but he leadeth astray the multitude.* From the 'Jews' the Evangelist turns to the 'multitudes.' Amongst these is eager discussion concerning Jesus; the speculation, the hesitation, the inquiry, were general, but all outward expression was suppressed. The use of the plural 'multitudes' seems to point to crowds rather than individuals as the disputants. The word 'multitude,' however, at the close of the verse is not without a contemptuous force,—it is the common crowd that He leads astray: possibly the multitudes of Jerusalem may be the speakers.

Ver. 13. *Howbeit no man spake boldly concerning him, because of the fear of the Jews.* Both sides, through their fear of the Jews, shrank from speaking out their thoughts. So complete was the ascendancy of these rulers over the people that no one ventured on any open discussion of the claims of Jesus. There was no doubt a belief that 'the Jews' were hostile to Him, but no public condemnation had been pronounced,—possibly no decision had been arrived at: till the leaders spoke out the people could only mutter their opinions.—Thus, then, the picture of what Jerusalem was at this moment is completed. Met together at the feast are Galileans, already half believers in Jesus, ready to be roused into enthusiastic activity by a display of His power; hostile Jews, the ecclesiastical authorities and those who shared their spirit, determined to crush out all inquiry as to His claims; and multitudes discussing these in secret, and revealing the utmost discordance of opinion. Everywhere we see movement, uncertainty, hope, or fear.

CHAPTER VII. 14-52.

*Discourses of Jesus at the Feast of Tabernacles.*

14 NOW about the midst<sup>1</sup> of the feast Jesus went up into the  
 15 temple,<sup>2</sup> and taught. "And the Jews<sup>3</sup> marvelled, say-  
 ing, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?  
 16 Jesus<sup>4</sup> answered them, and said, "My doctrine<sup>5</sup> is not mine,  
 17 but his that sent me. "If any man will do<sup>6</sup> his will, he shall  
 know of the doctrine,<sup>7</sup> whether it be<sup>8</sup> of God, or *whether* I  
 18 speak of<sup>9</sup> myself. "He that speaketh of<sup>9</sup> himself seeketh his  
 own glory: but he that seeketh his glory<sup>10</sup> that sent him, the  
 19 same is true, and<sup>11</sup> no unrighteousness is<sup>12</sup> in him. "Did not  
 Moses give you the law, and *yet* none of you keepeth the law?<sup>13</sup>  
 20 "Why go ye about<sup>14</sup> to kill me? The people<sup>15</sup> answered and  
 said,<sup>16</sup> Thou "hast a devil:<sup>17</sup> who goeth about<sup>18</sup> to kill thee?  
 21 Jesus answered and said unto them, "I have done<sup>19</sup> one work,  
 22 and ye all marvel. "Moses therefore gave unto you circum-  
 cision;<sup>20</sup> (not because<sup>21</sup> it is of Moses, but "of the fathers;)  
 23 and ye on the sabbath day circumcise a man. If a man<sup>22</sup> on  
 the sabbath day receive circumcision,<sup>23</sup> that the law of Moses  
 should<sup>24</sup> not be broken; "are ye angry at<sup>25</sup> me, because I have<sup>26</sup>  
 24 made a man every whit whole on the sabbath day? "Judge  
 not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.  
 25 Then said some of them of Jerusalem,<sup>27</sup> Is not this he, whom  
 26 they seek to kill? But,<sup>28</sup> lo, he speaketh boldly, and they say  
 nothing unto him. "Do<sup>29</sup> the "rulers know indeed<sup>30</sup> that this  
 27 is the very<sup>31</sup> Christ? "Howbeit we know this man whence he  
 is: but when Christ<sup>32</sup> cometh, no man knoweth<sup>33</sup> whence he is.  
 28 Then cried Jesus in the temple as he taught, saying,<sup>34</sup> Ye "both  
 know me, and ye know whence I am: and "I am<sup>35</sup> not come  
 of myself, but he that sent me "is true, "whom ye know not.  
 29 "But<sup>36</sup> I know him: for<sup>37</sup> I am from him, and "he hath<sup>38</sup> sent  
 30 me. Then they sought to take him: "but<sup>39</sup> no man laid

<sup>a</sup> Comp. Acts  
iv. 13.

<sup>b</sup> Chap. viii.  
28, xii. 49,  
xiv. 20, 24.  
Comp. chap  
v. 19.  
<sup>c</sup> Comp. chap.  
viii. 43, 44;  
2 Thess. ii.  
10.

<sup>d</sup> Chap. v. 42,  
44, viii. 50,  
xii. 43;  
1 Thess. ii.  
6.

<sup>e</sup> Chap. i. 17;  
Acts vii. 38.  
<sup>f</sup> Ver. 1.

<sup>g</sup> Chap. viii.  
48, 59, x. 80;  
Matt. xi. 28;  
Mark iii. 29.  
<sup>h</sup> Chap. v. 9.  
<sup>i</sup> Lev. xii. 3.  
<sup>k</sup> Gen. xvii.  
10.

<sup>l</sup> Chap. v. 16;  
Luke xiii.  
14, xiv. 3.  
<sup>m</sup> Comp. chap.  
viii. 15.

<sup>n</sup> Ver. 48.  
<sup>o</sup> Chap. iii. 1.  
<sup>p</sup> Chap. vi. 42;  
Matt. xiii.  
55.

<sup>q</sup> Comp. chap.  
viii. 14.

<sup>r</sup> Chap. v. 43.  
viii. 42.

<sup>s</sup> Comp. v. 39  
viii. 26.

<sup>t</sup> Chap. viii.  
55; Matt. xi  
27.

<sup>u</sup> Ver. 44,  
chap. viii.  
20.

<sup>1</sup> And when it was already the middle

<sup>2</sup> The Jews therefore "Jesus therefore

<sup>3</sup> he will perceive of the teaching

<sup>4</sup> the glory of him <sup>11</sup> and there is

<sup>5</sup> and no one of you doeth the law

<sup>6</sup> omit and said <sup>17</sup> demon

<sup>7</sup> For this cause hath Moses given you the circumcision <sup>31</sup> that

<sup>8</sup> If a man receiveth circumcision <sup>32</sup> omit receive circumcision

<sup>9</sup> may <sup>33</sup> with

<sup>10</sup> Some therefore of them of Jerusalem said <sup>34</sup> And <sup>35</sup> Can it be that

<sup>11</sup> omit indeed <sup>31</sup> omit very <sup>32</sup> the Christ <sup>33</sup> no one perceiveth

<sup>12</sup> Jesus therefore cried in the temple-courts teaching and saying

<sup>13</sup> have <sup>36</sup> omit But <sup>37</sup> because

<sup>14</sup> omit hath <sup>38</sup> They sought therefore to seize him, and

<sup>5</sup> teaching <sup>6</sup> temple-courts

<sup>8</sup> is <sup>9</sup> to do

<sup>12</sup> omit is <sup>15</sup> from

<sup>14</sup> Why seek ye <sup>15</sup> multitude

<sup>16</sup> who seeketh <sup>19</sup> I did

<sup>20</sup> omit receive circumcision

<sup>22</sup> omit have

<sup>28</sup> And <sup>29</sup> Can it be that

<sup>31</sup> omit indeed <sup>32</sup> the Christ

<sup>33</sup> no one perceiveth

<sup>36</sup> omit But <sup>37</sup> because

<sup>38</sup> They sought therefore to seize him, and



- 31 hands<sup>40</sup> on him, because<sup>41</sup> his hour was not yet come. And<sup>42</sup> many of the people<sup>43</sup> believed on<sup>44</sup> him, and said, When<sup>45</sup> Christ<sup>46</sup> cometh, will he do more miracles<sup>47</sup> than these which this man hath done?<sup>48</sup> Ver. 6.  
Chap. ii. 23
- 32 The Pharisees heard that the people murmured<sup>49</sup> such<sup>50</sup> things concerning him; and the Pharisees and the chief  
33 priests<sup>51</sup> sent officers to take<sup>52</sup> him. Then said Jesus<sup>53</sup> unto  
34 them,<sup>54</sup> Yet<sup>55</sup> a little while am I with you, and then<sup>56</sup> I go<sup>57</sup> unto him that sent me. Ye shall seek me, and shall not find  
35 me: and where I am, thither<sup>58</sup> ye cannot come. Then said  
the Jews<sup>59</sup> among themselves, Whither will he go,<sup>60</sup> that we  
shall not find him? will he go unto<sup>61</sup> the dispersed among<sup>62</sup> the  
36 Gentiles,<sup>63</sup> and teach the Gentiles?<sup>64</sup> What manner of saying  
is this that he said,<sup>65</sup> Ye shall seek me, and shall not find  
me: and where I am, thither<sup>66</sup> ye cannot come?  
37 In<sup>67</sup> the last day, that<sup>68</sup> great day of the feast, Jesus stood  
and cried, saying, If any man<sup>69</sup> thirst, let him come unto me,  
38 and drink. He that believeth on<sup>70</sup> me, as<sup>71</sup> the scripture  
hath<sup>72</sup> said, Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.  
39 (But<sup>73</sup> this spake he of<sup>74</sup> the Spirit, which they that believe  
on<sup>75</sup> him should<sup>76</sup> receive: for the Holy Ghost<sup>77</sup> was not yet  
given; because that Jesus was not yet<sup>78</sup> glorified.)  
40 Many of the people<sup>79</sup> therefore, when they heard this say-  
41 ing,<sup>80</sup> said, Of a truth this is<sup>81</sup> the Prophet. Others said, This  
is the Christ. But<sup>82</sup> some said, Shall Christ<sup>83</sup> come<sup>84</sup> out of  
42 Galilee? Hath not<sup>85</sup> the scripture said, That Christ<sup>86</sup> cometh  
of the seed of David, and<sup>87</sup> out of the town of Bethlehem,<sup>88</sup>  
43 where David was? So<sup>89</sup> there was a division among the  
44 people<sup>90</sup> because of him. And<sup>91</sup> some of them would have  
taken<sup>92</sup> him; but no man laid hands on him.  
45 Then came the officers<sup>93</sup> to the chief priests and Pharisees;  
and they said unto them, Why have ye not brought him?  
46 The officers answered, Never man spake like this man.<sup>94</sup>  
47 Then answered them the Pharisees, Are ye also deceived?<sup>95</sup>

- 40 his hand      41 But of the multitude many      42 in      43 the Christ  
44 signs      45 heard the multitude murmuring      46 these  
47 the chief priests and the Pharisees      48 seize      49 Jesus therefore said  
50 omit unto them      51 omit then      52 omit thither  
53 The Jews therefore said      54 Whither is this man about to go  
55 Is he about to go to the Dispersion of      56 Greeks  
57 What is this word which he spake      58 And in  
59 the      60 one      61 in      62 omit hath  
63 And      64 concerning      65 believed in  
66 were to      67 for the Spirit      68 Some of the multitude  
69 these words      70 omit But      71 What, doth the Christ  
72 the Christ      73 and from Bethlehem the village  
74 There arose therefore a division among the multitude      75 seized  
76 The officers therefore came      77 Never did a man so speak  
78 The Pharisees therefore answered them, Have ye also been led astray?

48 Have any<sup>79</sup> of the "rulers or of the Pharisees believed on <sup>80</sup> Ver. 26.  
 49 him?<sup>80</sup> But this people<sup>81</sup> who knoweth<sup>82</sup> not the law are  
 50 cursed. Nicodemus saith unto them, (<sup>83</sup> he that came to Jesus <sup>84</sup> Chap. iii. 2  
 51 by night,<sup>83</sup> being one of them,) <sup>85</sup> Doth our law judge *any*<sup>84</sup> <sup>86</sup> Deut. i. 16,  
 52 man, before it hear him, and know<sup>85</sup> what he doeth? They  
 answered and said unto him, Art thou also <sup>87</sup> Galilee? <sup>88</sup> Ver. 41.  
 Search, and look: for<sup>86</sup> out of Galilee ariseth no prophet.

<sup>79</sup> Hath any one      <sup>80</sup> believed in him, or of the Pharisees      <sup>81</sup> multitude  
<sup>82</sup> which understandeth      <sup>83</sup> to him before      <sup>84</sup> a  
<sup>85</sup> except it have first heard from himself and learned      <sup>86</sup> Search and see that

**CONTENTS.** In this section Jesus appears at the feast to which He went up when His Father's, and therefore His own, hour was come. The opportunity afforded by it of teaching is embraced, and we are presented with the teaching and its effect. In the successive discourses recorded, the same general line of thought is to be traced as in chaps. v. and vi. But a particular direction is given them by the circumstances amidst which they are spoken. Jesus comes again before us as the Fulfiller of the law, of the last and greatest of the annual feasts of Israel,—that feast which, in the language of the prophets, shadowed forth the gift of the Spirit and the highest glory of Messianic times. The effect is, as usual, twofold: some are attracted, others are repelled. The subordinate parts are—(1) vers. 14-24; (2) vers. 25-31; (3) vers. 32-36; (4) vers. 37-39; (5) vers. 40-44; (6) vers. 45-52.

Ver. 14. And when it was already the middle of the feast, Jesus went up into the temple-courts, and taught. It is evident that the Evangelist means to impress us with the suddenness of this appearance of Jesus in the temple-courts. The Lord suddenly comes to His temple, and, at this feast of peculiar joy and hope, He brings with Him a special message and promise of the new covenant (ver. 38; Mal. iii. 1). His teaching during the latter half of the sacred week is to prepare for His words on the last day of the feast.

Ver. 15. The Jews therefore marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned? The marvelling on the part of the 'Jews' (see note on chap. v. 20) is not an astonishment that compels further inquiry and leads towards belief. They are baffled, and forced to acknowledge against themselves what they would fain have denied. It was only after a long series of years spent in study that the Jewish scholar was permitted to become a teacher, and was solemnly ordained a member of the community of doctors of the law. Jesus, it was known, had not been taught in the rabbinical schools, nevertheless He was proving Himself, in such a manner that His enemies could not gainsay the fact, a skilled and powerful teacher. Jewish learning dealt chiefly with the letter of the written Word (especially the Law), and with the body of unwritten tradition. The words which crown our Lord's teaching at this feast enter into the very heart and express the inmost spirit of the whole Old Testament revelation (vers. 38, 39).

Ver. 16. Jesus therefore answered them, and said, My teaching is not mine, but his that sent

me. It was the practice of Jewish Rabbis to proclaim from whom they 'received' their teaching, and to quote the sayings of the wise men who preceded them. What they proclaimed of themselves the teaching of Jesus proclaims of itself to all worthy listeners. His teaching, though He had never 'learned' it in the sense in which they use the term, is yet not His own; neither in its substance nor in its authority must they count it His. As His works were those which the Father gave Him to accomplish (chap. v. 36), so His words were the expression of the truth which He has heard from God (viii. 40), and the Father hath given Him commandment what He shall say (xii. 49). Hence His words are God's words, and the teaching comes with the authority of God. Such teaching is self-evidential, where man really wishes to hear the voice of God: for—

Ver. 17. If any one will to do his will, he will perceive of the teaching, whether it is of God, or whether I speak from myself. Many a time did the Jews refuse to recognise the teaching of Jesus unless He could prove by a miracle that God was working with Him. Here He tells them that, had they the will to do God's will, they would need no miracle in evidence that in His teaching they heard the words of God: as the child at once recognises his father's voice, so would they, if living in harmony with God's will and purpose, recognise in His voice the voice of God. Such recognition of the words of Jesus is the test, therefore, of a will bent on doing the will of God, and every such effort of will is consciously strengthened by His words; while, on the other hand, the heart which seeks its own glory and not the glory of God is repelled by them (chap. v. 44). No words can more clearly show that the very end of the teaching of Jesus as set forth in this Gospel is not empty speculation but practical righteousness. It may be asked, Is our Lord merely stating a truth ('he *will* perceive'), or is He also giving a promise ('he *shall* perceive,—shall come to know')? Both thoughts are implied. Jesus does not say that the clear conception comes at once,—but come it will, come it shall. The last words must be carefully distinguished from those of chap. v. 31, etc., 'bearing witness concerning Myself.' Here the word used refers to the origin, the source, of the speaking; and the meaning exactly agrees with chap. v. 30,—there 'doing,' here 'speaking,' from or of Himself.

The words of ver. 17 are especially remarkable when we call to mind that they were addressed to persons all whose thoughts of revelation as a thing demonstrated to man were connected with tokens

of the Divine presence appealing to the senses. What a new world did it open up to tell *them* that perception of the Divine origin of any teaching depends upon our seeing that it strengthens and perfects that moral nature which is within us the counterpart of the Divine nature!

Ver. 18. *He that speaketh from himself seeketh his own glory.* If a man speaks from himself, giving out all that he says as coming from himself, it is clear that he is seeking the glory of no one but himself. If one who so acts is a messenger from another (and here the thought in the later words, 'him that sent him,' seems intended to apply to the whole verse), it is plain that his attitude is altogether false: he represents as 'from himself' that which really is 'from him that sent him.'—But he that seeketh the glory of him that sent him, the same is true, and there is no unrighteousness in him. From the maxim contained in the first clause of this verse it follows at once that whoever is not seeking his own glory does not speak from himself. But every word of Jesus shows that He seeks His Father's glory: hence it cannot be that He is speaking from Himself.—But as a messenger speaking from himself and aiming at his own glory is false to his position and work, so he that seeks the glory of the sender only is true to them, and there is no unrighteousness in him,—his work and duty as messenger are fully accomplished. These last words, like the first clause of the verse, are perfectly general, though absolutely realised in Christ alone. By Him the condition is completely fulfilled: of Him the freedom from unrighteousness is absolutely true. This verse connects itself with what precedes and with what follows: (1) A will to do God's will will lead to right judgment respecting Christ (ver. 17), because he who has such a will can discern the complete submission of Jesus to the will of God, His complete freedom from self-seeking (ver. 18); (2) Is it thus proved to every one who is seeking to do God's will that Jesus is the real messenger of God, accurately teaching His will, then the accusation which is in the minds of His enemies (vers. 21, 22), that He has contradicted God's will in the matter of the Sabbath (chap. v. 18), must fall to the ground of itself.

Ver. 19. *Did not Moses give you the law, and no one of you doeth the law? Why seek ye to kill me?* There are two ways in which this verse may be taken, and between them it is not easy to decide. They turn on the interpretation of 'no one of you doeth the law'; for this may find its explanation either in the words that immediately follow or in vers. 21-25. It may be best to give the connection of thought according to each of these views. In both cases the 'law' chiefly denotes the Ten Commandments. (1) The accusation of the Jews against Jesus, of having transgressed God's will, must fall to the ground (ver. 18), but not so His accusation against them. Moses, whom all accepted as God's true messenger, gave them the law, which therefore expressed God's will, and yet every one of them was breaking the law, for they were seeking to kill Jesus. They were therefore self-convicted by their own works of opposing the revealed will of God: no wonder therefore that they had rejected Jesus. In favour of this explanation we may say that the words are (vers. 15, 16) addressed to 'the Jews,' whose murderous intention Jesus well knew not to have been inspired by true zeal for the law,—that the words so

understood aptly follow vers. 17, 18,—and that we thus secure for the solemn expression 'doeth the law' a natural and worthy sense. (2) The other explanation connects this verse less strictly with ver. 18. In Jesus, as a true messenger, there is no unrighteousness. What they have called unrighteousness is altogether righteous,—nay, it is what they themselves habitually do, and rightly do. Moses gave them the law, the whole law, and yet there is no one of them that keeps the whole law. Every one of them (as the example afterwards given proves) sets aside one of two conflicting laws, breaks one commandment when there is no other way of keeping a higher command inviolate; and this is all that Jesus did in the act for which they seek to kill Him. This second explanation agrees well with what follows; and, although at first sight it seems almost too mild to be spoken to 'the Jews,' it has really great sharpness. It must have at once penetrated their hearts and thrown a light upon the guilt and folly of their conduct which they could only evade by again deliberately turning their eyes from the light. 'No one of you doeth the law' is also a very heavy charge. On the whole, the second interpretation seems preferable to the first.

Ver. 20. *The multitude answered, Thou hast a demon; who seeketh to kill thee?* It is important to observe that this answer is returned by the *multitude*, not by those to whom ver. 19 is addressed, and the multitude is apparently in entire ignorance of the designs of 'the Jews.' That the people should have thought possession by a demon the only possible explanation of the presence of such a thought in the mind of Jesus places in boldest relief the guilt of 'the Jews.' To bring this out is probably the explanation of the insertion of a remark for which it is otherwise difficult to account.

Ver. 21. *Jesus answered and said unto them, I did one work, and ye all marvel.* This answer seems to have been addressed to the multitude, or rather to the whole body of those present including 'the Jews,' not to 'the Jews' alone (as is supposed by some who make ver. 20 a parenthesis): hence the calmness of the tone. 'One work,' viz. that recorded in chap. v. 1-8,—the miracle, with all its attendant circumstances. Many other miracles had Jesus wrought in Jerusalem (chap. ii. 25), but this one had caused all the amazement and repulsion of feeling of which He is here speaking.

Ver. 22. *For this cause hath Moses given you the circumcision (not that it is of Moses but of the fathers), and ye on the sabbath day circumsise a man.* The very law was intended to teach them the fundamental principle upon which Jesus rested His defence, to look beyond the letter to the spirit, and to see that sometimes an ordinance is most honoured when its letter is broken. 'For this cause'—to teach this lesson—Moses, who gave the Ten Commandments (ver. 19), one of which enjoined the sabbath rest, took up into the law which he gave (see ver. 23, 'the law of Moses') the far earlier ordinance of circumcision, laying down or rather repeating the strict rule that the rite must be performed on the eighth day (Lev. xii. 3). When this eighth day fell on the sabbath, the Jews, however inconsistent the rite might seem with the rigid sabbath rest, yet, with a true instinct, never hesitated to circumcise a child. They felt that to receive the sign of God's cove-

nant, the token of consecration and of the removal of uncleanness (and—may we add?—the token of the promise which was before and above the law, Gal. iii. 17), could never be really inconsistent with any command of God. In acting as they did, therefore, they proved that in this matter the lesson which the lawgiver designed to teach had been truly learned by them; yet it was a lesson essentially the same as that which the healing by Jesus on the sabbath day had taught. This passage is of great interest as showing that in many respects the law, even whilst seeming to deal in positive precepts only, was intended to become, and in some measure actually was, a discipline, preparing for the 'dispensation of the Spirit.'

Ver. 23. **If a man receiveth circumcision on the sabbath day, that the law of Moses may not be broken, are ye angry with me, because I made a man every whit whole on the sabbath day?** Their reverence for the law and their determination that it should not be broken led them to break the letter of the Fourth Commandment, or rather to do that which they would otherwise have thought inconsistent with its precept. How then can they be indignant at Jesus for the deed which He had done on the sabbath? He had performed a far more healing work than circumcision. He had given not merely a token of the removal of uncleanness, but complete freedom from the blight and woe which sin had brought (see chap. v. 14) on the 'whole man.' It may be thought that in this last expression our Lord refers only to the cure of a disease by which the entire body had been prostrated; but the verse just quoted (chap. v. 14), and the recollection of the figurative and spiritual application of the rite of circumcision with which the prophets had made the Jews familiar, warn us against limiting the miracle at the pool of Bethesda to the restoration of physical health.

Ver. 24. **Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.** Righteously had they judged in regard to themselves. So let them judge His work, and they will see that, where they had suspected only the presence of iniquity, there was the highest righteousness.

Ver. 25. **Some therefore of them of Jerusalem said, Is not this he whom they seek to kill? The speakers are a different class from those hitherto introduced,—'they of Jerusalem:' these seem to have more knowledge of the designs of 'the Jews' than was possessed by 'the multitude' (ver. 20).**

Ver. 26. **And, lo, he speaketh boldly, and they say nothing unto him. Can it be that the rulers know that this is the Christ?** No opinion as to these designs is expressed; there is neither sympathy nor blame; there is only bewilderment, occasioned by the inconsistency between the supposed wishes of the rulers and the boldness and freedom with which Jesus is allowed to speak. Can it be that there is some secret reason for this,—that the rulers have really made a discovery, which they will not allow,—that this is the Christ? The question is no sooner asked than it is answered by themselves:—

Ver. 27. **Howbeit we know this man whence he is; but when the Christ cometh, no one perceiveth whence he is.** In ver. 42 we read of the expectation that the Christ would come from Bethlehem (see also Matt. ii. 5). But there is no inconsistency between this verse and that, for it

seems to have been the belief of the Jews that the Redeemer would indeed first appear in Bethlehem, but would then be snatched away and hidden, and finally would afterwards suddenly manifest Himself,—from what place and at what time no one could tell. So Jesus warns His disciples that the cry will be heard, 'Lo, here is the Christ; or, Lo, he is there' (Mark xiii. 21).

Vers. 28, 29. **Jesus therefore cried in the temple-courts teaching and saying.** Knowing that such words were in the mouths of the people of Jerusalem, Jesus cried aloud in the hearing of all. The word 'teaching' may seem unnecessary: it appears to be added in order to link what is here said to the teaching of vers. 14 and 16: what He says is no chance utterance, but forms part of the teaching designed for this festival. —**Ye both know me, and ye know whence I am.** Jesus allows that they had a certain knowledge of Him, but He does this for the purpose of showing immediately thereafter that it was altogether inadequate and at fault. It was indeed important in one respect, for it involved the acknowledgment of His true humanity; but, denying all else, refusing to recognise Him in His higher aspect, scouting His claims to be the Sent of God, the expression of the eternal Father, it was really no more than an outward and carnal knowledge of Him. There seems to be a distinction between 'whence I am' and 'whence I come' (viii. 14). The latter includes more directly the idea of the Divine mission of Jesus.—**And I have not come of myself, but he that sent me is true, whom ye know not. I know him, because I am from him, and he sent me.** Words containing that true knowledge of Jesus which these men 'of Jerusalem' had not. It consists in recognising in Him the 'Sent' of Him who is 'true,' not merely veracious or faithful, but *real*, who is the ground and essence of all reality, the only living and true God. In this respect those to whom Jesus was now speaking did not know Him; they beheld the outward man; they did not behold the manifestation of the eternal God. This ignorance, too, arose from the fact that they did not know God Himself. They thought that they knew Him; but they did not, for they had not penetrated to the right conception of His spiritual, righteous nature,—a nature corresponding only to eternal realities, to what is 'true.' Not knowing God, how could they know Jesus who 'manifested' the true God, who was 'from' the true God, and whom the true God 'sent'? Had they known the One they would have recognised the Other (chap. v. 37, viii. 19). The words of vers. 28, 29 are thus words of sharp reproof.

Ver. 30. **They sought therefore to seize him.** Jesus had not mentioned the name of God, but those with whom He spoke (familiar with modes of speech in which the Divine Name was left unspoken and replaced by a pronoun, as here, or by some attribute) did not miss His meaning. He had denied to them the knowledge of God, and at the same time had claimed for Himself the closest fellowship with Him, to be indeed the very expression of what He was.—**And no man laid his hand on him, because his hour was not yet come.** Their zeal and enmity were at once aroused; the 'men of Jerusalem' followed in the steps of 'the Jews' (ver. 1). Yet they could not touch Him, for it was not yet God's time.

Ver. 31. **But of the multitude many believed**

in him, and said, When the Christ cometh, will he do more signs than these which this man hath done? The last verse showed how the hostility to Jesus was growing; this verse presents the brighter side. The division of the people goes on continually increasing: they who are of the light are attracted towards Jesus, they who are of darkness are repelled. The faith of these believers is real ('they believed in Him'), though not so firm and sure as that which rests less on 'signs' than on His own word.

Ver. 32. The Pharisees heard the multitude murmuring these things concerning him, and the chief priests and the Pharisees sent officers to seize him. To the various parties already mentioned in this chapter, the Jews (vers. 11, 13, 15), the multitudes (ver. 12), or the multitude (vers. 20, 31), and them of Jerusalem (ver. 25), are here added the Pharisees and also the chief priests, now mentioned for the first time in this Gospel. In three earlier passages (chap. i. 24, iii. 1, iv. 1) John has spoken of the Pharisees, and in the last of these only (chap. iv. 1) has there been any intimation of either secret or open hostility on the part of this sect toward our Lord. It is otherwise with the other Gospels. In the course of that Galilean ministry which is not distinctly recorded by John the Pharisees occupy a very distinct position as foes of Jesus. To the period between John's last mention of the Pharisees and the present verse belong His controversies with them respecting fasting, His association with sinners (Matt. ix.; Mark ii.; Luke v.—compare Luke vii. 49), the sabbath (Matt. xii.; Mark ii.; Luke vi.), the tradition of the elders (Matt. xv.; Mark vii.), and the forgiveness of sins (Luke v.; Matt. ix.; Mark ii.—compare Luke vii. 39). The Pharisees have attempted to persuade the multitude that He wrought His miracles through the prince of the devils (Matt. ix.; Matt. xii.; Mark iii.). He has refused their request that they might see a sign from heaven (Matt. xvi.; Mark viii.), and has warned the disciples against their teaching (Matt. xvi.; Mark viii.) and their 'righteousness' (Matt. v. 20). In Matt. xii. 14 we read that the Pharisees (Mark iii. 6, the Pharisees and the Herodians) held a consultation how they might destroy Him. Up to this point, however, in the narrative of the Fourth Gospel it would seem most probable that, as a body, they had not assumed a position of distinct hostility to our Lord. It was not in Galilee, of which the earlier Gospels speak, but in Jerusalem, where were their chief members and influence, that an organized opposition could best be formed by them; and in many passages at all events we gather that those of their number who assailed Jesus were no more than emissaries sent down from the capital by the rulers. Things now take a different turn in John's Gospel. The Pharisees come more prominently forward, act more as a party than as individuals, and begin to constitute a distinctly hostile power to Jesus. The events which had passed in Galilee, though not noted by John, may explain the change.—The chief priests are, as has been said, first mentioned here by John. In the other Gospels also they are scarcely referred to up to this period of the history, for Matt. xvi. 21 (Mark viii. 31; Luke ix. 22) is a prophecy, and the only remaining passage in the first three Gospels is Matt. ii. 4, where it is said that Herod convened 'all the high priests and scribes of the people.' It has been supposed that

this expression denotes the Sanhedrin, but the great court of the nation did not include 'all the scribes.' With much more certainty may the words of Matt. xvi. 21, 'the elders and the high priests and the scribes,' be taken as an enumeration of the three elements of the supreme council. What is the exact meaning of chief priests or high priests, thus spoken of in the plural, it is perhaps impossible to say. The usual view is that the chiefs of the twenty-four classes of priests are intended; but there seems little or no evidence in support of this explanation. The only point on which we can speak with certainty is that the expression must include all living who had been high priests. In those unsettled times the tenure of office was occasionally very short, and always precarious. Annas the father-in-law of Caiaphas (chap. xviii. 13) was deposed by the Roman Procurator about fourteen years before the time of which we now speak: within three or four years of his deposition as many as four were appointed to the high-priesthood, the last of whom, Caiaphas, retained office until A.D. 36. At this time, therefore, besides the actual high priest, three or four may have been living who had once borne this name, and their former dignity would give them weight in a council which consisted of Jews alone. Whether prominent members of families to which present or former high priests belonged (compare Acts iv. 6) were also included under this name, or whether it denoted other priests who stood high in influence as members of the Sanhedrin, is very doubtful.—The multitude talked among themselves in the temple of the grounds of the faith in Jesus which was growing in their hearts. Their talk is secret ('murmuring'), but not so secret that the Pharisees did not overhear their words. Convinced that the teaching which so powerfully impresses the people must be heard no longer, they seek therefore the aid of the chief priests, whose attendants are immediately despatched with orders to seize Jesus.

Ver. 33. Jesus therefore said, Yet a little while am I with you, and I go unto him that sent me. In the action now taken by His foes Jesus sees a token of the rapidity with which His hour is approaching. These words, which (ver. 35) were spoken in the presence of 'the Jews,' declare His perfect knowledge of their designs. But they are also words of judgment, taking from His enemies their last hope.

Ver. 34. Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me. The frequent occurrence of the 'seeking' in this chapter suggests as the first meaning of these words, Ye will seek to lay hands on me, but shall not find me. That was the only 'seeking' of which the Jews wished to think. But the eye of Jesus rested on the calamities from which at a future time they would seek to be delivered by the Christ, but would seek in vain. His enemies have refused to recognise in His words the teaching of 'Him that sent' Him (ver. 16): when He has returned to His Father their eyes will be opened to their madness and folly.—And where I am, ye cannot come. 'Where I am,' He says, not 'where I shall be:' here, as elsewhere, the simple expression of continuous existence is most befitting for Him who is one with the Father. Into that Fellowship, that Presence, no enemies of the Son shall come.

Ver. 35. The Jews therefore said among themselves, Whither is this man about to go, that we

**shall not find him?** Our Lord's words were mysterious, but yet were so closely linked with His earlier teaching, as related in this very chapter, that their general meaning would be clear to every patient listener. Vers. 16 and 17 were alone sufficient to show that 'to Him that sent me' could only mean 'to God.' But this impression 'the Jews' must at all hazards avert: chap. viii. 22 shows how eagerly they sought to blunt the edge of such words as Jesus has now spoken. There they suggest that only by seeking death can He escape their search: here that it is on exile amongst Gentiles that He has now resolved. His teaching has seemed to them a complete reversal of Jewish modes of thought. No learning of the schools prepared Him for His self-chosen office (ver. 15): He accuses all Israel of having broken the law of Moses (ver. 19): He sets at nought the most rigid rules of Sabbath observance: all things show that He has no sympathy with, no tolerance for, the most firmly established laws and usages of the Jewish people. And now He is going, not to return. Where?—**Is he about to go to the Dispersion of the Greeks, and teach the Greeks?** Can it be that He has cast off Jews altogether and is going to Gentiles? This is said in bitter scorn, but it may have been suggested by words of Jesus not expressly recorded. In answering His brethren just before the feast (ver. 7) He had spoken of 'the world'; before the end of the same feast (viii. 12) He says, 'I am the light of the world.' Even if we were not to accept the Jewish tradition which records that in the offering of the seventy bullocks at the feast of Tabernacles there was distinct reference to the ('seventy') nations of the Gentile world—a tradition deeply interesting and probably true—we can have no difficulty in supposing that in His teaching during the festival Jesus had repeatedly used words regarding 'the world' which enemies might readily pervert. His interest, they say in effect, is not with Jews but with the 'world': is he leaving us?—then surely He is going to the world, to the heathen whom He loves.—The great difficulty of this verse is the use of such a phrase as 'the Dispersion of the Greeks.' An explanation is furnished by the thought already suggested,—that the Jews, with irony and scorn, would show forth Jesus as reversing all their cherished instincts, beliefs, and usages. If a true Israelite must depart from the Holy Land, he resorts to the Dispersion of his brethren. Not so with this man: He too is departing from us, but it is a Dispersion of Gentiles, not of Israelites, that He will seek,—it is Gentiles whom He will teach. As in the case of Caiaphas (chap. xi. 50, 51), so here: words spoken in hate and scorn are an unconscious prophecy. He will teach and gather together the children of God that are scattered abroad,—this is the very purpose of His coming. The book which is the companion to this Gospel, the Apocalypse, contains many examples of this new and (so to speak) converse application of familiar words. Thus in Rev. i. 7, we find mankind designated as 'tribes of the earth.' It is right to say that the explanation of 'Dispersion of the Greeks' which we have given is not that generally received. The common view is that the Jews represent Jesus as going to 'the Dispersion amongst the Gentiles,' and, from this as a point of departure (like the apostles of Jesus afterwards), becoming a teacher of the Gentiles. We can only briefly give our reasons

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for dissenting from this view. (1) The meaning can hardly be obtained without straining the original words. (2) As probably many of 'the multitude' themselves belonged to 'the Dispersion,' the added words 'of the Greeks' would be useless if intended as explanatory, insulting if used for depreciation. (3) The first clause becomes almost superfluous: why should they not say at once, *Is He about to go amongst the Greeks?* (4) The introduction of a 'point of departure' or connecting link is most unsuitable to the present state of feeling of our Lord's enemies, 'the Jews.'

Ver. 36. **What is this word which he spake, Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, ye cannot come?** This verse contains little more than a repetition of the Saviour's former statement, but is useful in reminding us that the Jews, whose bitter words we have just been considering, were themselves perplexed by what they heard. We must not suppose that they pondered and then rejected the teaching of Jesus: their enmity rendered impossible that patient thought which would have found the key to His mysterious language; they understood enough to have been attracted, had they only been willing listeners, by the light and the life of His words. Their ignorance resulted from the absence of the will to learn and do God's will (ver. 17).

Ver. 37. **And in the last day, the great day, of the feast.** The feast of Tabernacles properly so called continued seven days. During (a part



A Water Carrier.

of) each day all the men of Israel dwelt in booths made with boughs of palm, willow, pine, and other trees. Day by day burnt-offerings and other sacrifices were presented in unusual profusion. Every morning, whilst the Israelites assembled in the temple-courts, one of the priests brought water drawn in a golden urn from the pool of Siloam, and amidst the sounding of trumpets and other demonstrations of joy poured the water upon the altar. This rite is not mentioned in the Old

Testament; but, as a commemoration of the miraculous supply of water in the wilderness, it was altogether in harmony with the general spirit of the festival. The chanting of the great Hallel (Ps. cxiii.-cxviii.) celebrated the past; but (as we learn from the Talmud) the Jews also connected with the ceremony the words of Isaiah (xii. 3), 'Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation,' and saw in it a type of the effusion of the Holy Spirit. On the evening of the first and (probably) of each following day the 'rejoicing of the drawing of the water' was celebrated in the court of the women, with dancing, singing, and music; and lamps raised on four immense candelabra placed in the middle of the same court illuminated both the temple and the city. On the seventh day the ordinary ceremonies of the feast came to an end. There was added, however, an eighth day (Num. xxix. 35), a day of holy convocation on which no work might be done. This day did not strictly belong to the feast, but was 'a feast by itself,' perhaps as closing (not only the feast of Tabernacles, but also) the whole series of festivals for the year: naturally, however, it became attached to the feast of Tabernacles in ordinary speech. Whether the 'great day' so emphatically mentioned here was this eighth day or the seventh day of the feast is a point which has been much discussed, and on which we cannot arrive at certainty. On the whole it is most probable that the eighth day is referred to, the day of holy rest in which the feasts seemed to reach their culmination, and which retained the sacred associations of the festival just past, though the marks of special rejoicing had come to an end. This last day He to whom all the festivals of Israel pointed chose for the proclamation which showed the joy and hope of the feast of Tabernacles fulfilled in Himself.—**Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any one thirst, let him come unto me and drink.** The words 'stood and cried' bring into relief the solemn earnestness of this declaration, which completed and perfected the teaching of Jesus at this feast. The occasion was given (if we are right in regarding the eighth as 'the great day'), not by the ceremony observed, but by the blank left through the cessation of the familiar custom. The water had been poured upon the altar for seven days, reminding of past miracles of God's mercy and promises of yet richer grace: hopes had been raised, but not yet satisfied. When the ceremonies had reached their close, Jesus 'stood and cried' to the multitudes that what they had hitherto looked for in vain they shall receive in Him. As in the synagogue of Nazareth He read from the book of Isaiah, and declared that the Scripture was that day fulfilled in their ears, so here He takes up familiar words of the same prophet (Isa. lv. 1), calling every one that thirsteth to come unto Him.

Ver. 38. **He that believeth in me, as the scripture said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.** The words of ver. 37 remind us of the people who drank of the spiritual rock that followed them (1 Cor. x. 4), the miracle commemorated in the pouring of the water from Siloam; the last words ('shall flow rivers') resemble more the promise of Isa. xii. 3, amplified in all its parts. There is nothing incongruous in this union of promises: Isa. xlv. 3 includes both, 'I will pour water upon him that is thirsty and floods upon the dry ground.' This is not the first time that

we have found 'coming to Jesus' and 'believing in Him' thus brought together; see the note on chap. vi. 35. Out of the heart of him that thus cometh, thus believeth in Jesus, shall flow rivers of living water. Not only shall he receive what his thirst demands and be satisfied, but he himself shall become the source of a stream—nay rivers—of living waters. The water shall bring life to him: the water flowing out of his heart shall bring life wherever it comes. All this is the gift of Jesus, who is set forth as the One Source of the water of Life. But what is meant by 'as the Scripture said'? Many passages of the Old Testament contain similar imagery, and some of these have been already quoted; but one only appears really to accord with the figure of this verse, viz. the vision of Ezek. xlvi. The prophet saw a stream of living water issuing from the temple, and expanding into a river whose waters brought life wherever they flowed. The temple prefigured Christ (chap. ii. 21); the water of life is the gift of the Holy Ghost, pre-eminently Christ's gift (chap. iv. 14). The Lord Himself received into the believer's heart brings the gift of the living water; and from Him, thus abiding in the heart, flows the river of the water of life.

Ver. 39. **And this spake he concerning the Spirit, which they that believed in him were to receive: for the Spirit was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.** To this authoritative explanation of the 'living water' we have more than once referred (see chap. iv. 10, 14). The word is a promise still, speaking of a future not a present gift ('were to receive'). The verse before us is one which it is impossible to express in English without a paraphrase. In the first clause we find 'the Spirit,' but in the second the article is absent, and the words literally mean 'for spirit was not yet,'—the word 'spirit' meaning, not the Holy Spirit as a Person, but a bestowal or reception of His influence and power. Only when Jesus was glorified,—that is, only when He had died, had risen, had ascended on high, had been invested with the glory which was His own at the right hand of the Father, would man receive that spiritual power which is the condition of all spiritual life. When Jesus Himself, the God-man, is perfected, then and not till then does He receive power to bestow the Holy Spirit on mankind. This mysterious subject mainly belongs, however, to later chapters of this Gospel (see especially chap. xvi. 7).

Here our Lord's revelation of Himself as the fulfilment of the Old Testament culminates. The feast of Tabernacles was the last great feast of the year. It was also the feast which raised sacred rejoicing to its highest point; which shadowed forth the full bestowal of Messianic blessings (comp. Zech. xiv. 16); and which spoke most of the Holy Spirit, the supreme gift of Jesus to His people. With its fulfilment all the brightest anticipations of ancient prophecy are realised. The effect of this revelation of Jesus by Himself is now traced.

Ver. 40. **Some of the multitude therefore, when they heard these words, said, Of a truth this is the prophet.** On 'the prophet,' and the distinction between this appellation and 'the Christ,' see the note on chap. i. 21.

Vers. 41, 42. **Others said, This is the Christ. Some said, What doth the Christ come out of Galilee? Hath not the scripture said, That the**

Christ cometh of the seed of David, and from Bethlehem, the village where David was? See Matt. ii. 6. This explanation of the prophecy of Micah (chap. v. 2) is found in the Targum, and seems to have been commonly received by the Jews.

Vers. 43, 44. There arose therefore a division among the multitude because of him. And some of them would have seized him; but no man laid hands on him. Compare ver. 30. Here, as there, the result of the division of opinion is a more eager attempt to apprehend Him about whom the dispute has arisen. The last words of ver. 30 may be again supplied in thought: 'his hour was not yet come.'

Ver. 45. The officers therefore came to the chief priests and Pharisees; and they said unto them, Why have ye not brought him? The sending of the officers is mentioned in ver. 32. From ver. 37 we may gather that they had been lingering near Him for a day or more: His last words seem to have deprived them of all power to lay hands on Him. There is a minute difference between the senders as described in ver. 32 ('the chief priests and the Pharisees') and here, where the second article is dropped. The slight change serves to emphasize the union of the two elements (so to speak) into one for the purpose in hand, but is not sufficient to suggest that here reference is made to the Sanhedrin as a body. It does not appear that there is formal action of the Sanhedrin earlier than the record in chap. xi. 47.

Ver. 46. The officers answered, Never did a man so speak. A new testimony to Jesus, borne by men who, awed by the majesty of His words, instead of attempting a deed of violence, declare to their very masters that He is more than man.

Vers. 47, 48, 49. The Pharisees therefore answered them, Have ye also been led astray? Hath any one of the rulers believed in him, or of the Pharisees? But this multitude which understandeth not the law are cursed. In such a matter as the acceptance of any man as Messiah, the judgment of the rulers (members of the Sanhedrin) must surely be decisive; but what ruler or (to take a wider range, and include all who accurately interpret the Law and uphold its majesty) who of the Pharisees has sanctioned the

claims of Jesus? The foolish multitude may have done so, in this showing an ignorance which, in the mind of the Pharisees, deserves and brings with it a curse.—Of such contemptuous treatment of the common people, as distinguished from 'the disciples of the wise,' many examples may be produced from the sayings of Jewish Rabbins.—Once more it may be noted, our Lord's enemies pronounce their own condemnation in proclaiming their unbelief.

Vers. 50, 51. Nicodemus saith unto them (he that came to him before, being one of them), Doth our law judge a man, except it have first heard from himself and learned what he doeth? Twice already in this section have we read of the restraint placed on the enemies of Jesus. Those amongst the multitude who were ill affected towards Him were kept back from doing Him harm (ver. 44); the officers likewise were restrained (ver. 46); now the Sanhedrists themselves are to be foiled, and this through one of themselves. Nicodemus has so far overcome his fear that he defends Jesus against the glaring injustice of his fellow-rulers, undeterred by the expression of their scorn just uttered. He appeals to the law, all knowledge of which they have proudly arrogated to themselves, and shows that of this very law they are themselves transgressors.

Ver. 52. They answered and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee? Search and see that out of Galilee ariseth no prophet. No answer to the argument was possible: they can but turn on Nicodemus himself. They assume that no one but a Galilean can take the side of Jesus. The last words are difficult, because at least one of the ancient prophets (Jonah) was of Galilee. But the words do not seem to be intended to include all the past, so much as to express what Jews held to be, and to have long been, a stated rule of Divine Providence: in their scorn of Galilee, and their arrogant assumption of complete knowledge of 'the law,' they regard it as impossible that out of that land any prophet should arise; least of all can it be the birthplace of the Messiah.

For remarks on the following verses, extending from vii. 53 to viii. 11, see the close of this Commentary.

## CHAPTER VIII. 12-59.

*Jesus the Son of the Father, the Giver of Sonship and, therewith, of Light.*

- 12 **T**HEN spake Jesus again<sup>1</sup> unto them, saying, "I am the light of <sup>b</sup>the world: he that <sup>c</sup>followeth me shall not <sup>d</sup>walk in "darkness," but shall have the light of <sup>e</sup>life. The Pharisees therefore said unto him, "Thou bearest record of <sup>f</sup>thyself; thy record <sup>g</sup>is not true. Jesus answered and said unto them, Though <sup>h</sup>I bear record of <sup>i</sup>myself, yet<sup>7</sup> my record <sup>j</sup>is true: <sup>k</sup>for <sup>l</sup>I know whence I came, and whither I go; but <sup>m</sup>ye cannot tell<sup>8</sup> whence I come, and <sup>n</sup>whither I go. <sup>o</sup>Ye

<sup>1</sup> Again therefore Jesus spake

<sup>2</sup> witness concerning

<sup>3</sup> because

<sup>4</sup> in no wise

<sup>5</sup> witness

<sup>6</sup> know not

<sup>7</sup> Even if

<sup>8</sup> the darkness

<sup>9</sup> omit yet

<sup>10</sup> or

<sup>a</sup> See chap. iii. 19.

<sup>b</sup> Chap. i. 29.

<sup>c</sup> Chap. x. 27,

<sup>d</sup> xii. 26,

<sup>e</sup> xxi. 19, 22.

<sup>f</sup> Chap. v. 26.

<sup>g</sup> Chap. v. 31.

<sup>h</sup> See chap. xiii. 3.

<sup>i</sup> Chap. vii. 28.

<sup>j</sup> Chap. vii. 24.



- 16 judge after the flesh; <sup>1</sup> I judge no man.<sup>11</sup> And yet<sup>12</sup> if I  
 judge, <sup>13</sup> my judgment is true: for <sup>14</sup> I 'am not alone, but I and  
 17 the Father that sent me. <sup>15</sup> It is also written in your law,<sup>16</sup>  
 18 that the testimony<sup>17</sup> of two men is true. I am one<sup>18</sup> that  
 bear<sup>19</sup> witness of<sup>20</sup> myself, and <sup>21</sup> the Father that sent me  
 19 beareth witness of<sup>22</sup> me. Then said they<sup>23</sup> unto him, Where  
 is thy Father? Jesus answered, <sup>24</sup> Ye neither know me,<sup>25</sup> nor  
<sup>26</sup> my Father: <sup>27</sup> if ye had known<sup>28</sup> me, ye should have known<sup>29</sup>  
 20 my Father also. These words spake Jesus<sup>30</sup> in <sup>31</sup> the treasury,  
 as he taught<sup>32</sup> in the temple:<sup>33</sup> and <sup>34</sup> no man laid hands on  
 him; <sup>35</sup> <sup>36</sup> for<sup>37</sup> his hour was not yet come.
- 21 Then said Jesus<sup>38</sup> again unto them, I go my way,<sup>39</sup> and <sup>40</sup> ye  
 shall seek me, and <sup>41</sup> shall die in your sins:<sup>42</sup> whither I go, ye  
 22 cannot come. <sup>43</sup> Then said the Jews,<sup>44</sup> Will he kill himself?  
 23 because he saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come. And he said  
 unto them, Ye are from beneath; <sup>45</sup> I am from above: ye are  
 24 <sup>46</sup> of this world; I am not of this world. <sup>47</sup> I said therefore unto  
 you, that ye shall die in your sins: for <sup>48</sup> if ye believe not<sup>49</sup> that  
 25 <sup>50</sup> I am *he*,<sup>51</sup> ye shall die in your sins. Then said they<sup>52</sup> unto  
 him, Who art thou? And<sup>53</sup> Jesus saith<sup>54</sup> unto them, Even *the*  
 26 *same* that I said unto you from the beginning:<sup>55</sup> I have many  
 things to say<sup>56</sup> and to judge of<sup>57</sup> you: but<sup>58</sup> he <sup>59</sup> that sent me  
 is true; and <sup>60</sup> I speak to the world those things which I have  
 27 heard of him.<sup>61</sup> They understood<sup>62</sup> not that he spake to them  
 28 of the Father. Then said Jesus<sup>63</sup> unto them,<sup>64</sup> When ye have  
<sup>65</sup> lifted up<sup>66</sup> the <sup>67</sup> Son of man, then shall ye know that <sup>68</sup> I am  
*he*,<sup>69</sup> and <sup>70</sup> that I do nothing of myself;<sup>71</sup> but <sup>72</sup> as my Father  
 29 hath taught me,<sup>73</sup> I speak these things. And <sup>74</sup> he that sent me  
 is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; <sup>75</sup> for<sup>76</sup> I do  
 30 always those things that please him.<sup>77</sup> <sup>78</sup> As he spake these  
 words,<sup>79</sup> many believed on<sup>80</sup> him.
- 31 Then said Jesus<sup>81</sup> to those<sup>82</sup> Jews which believed<sup>83</sup> on<sup>84</sup> him,  
 If ye <sup>85</sup> continue<sup>86</sup> in my word, *then* are ye my disciples in-  
 32 deed;<sup>87</sup> And ye shall know the truth, and <sup>88</sup> the truth shall
- <sup>11</sup> one                      <sup>12</sup> But even                      <sup>13</sup> But in your own law also it is written  
<sup>14</sup> witness                      <sup>15</sup> he                      <sup>16</sup> beareth                      <sup>17</sup> concerning                      <sup>18</sup> They said therefore  
<sup>19</sup> Ye know neither me                      <sup>20</sup> ye knew                      <sup>21</sup> ye would know  
<sup>22</sup> he                      <sup>23</sup> teaching                      <sup>24</sup> temple-courts                      <sup>25</sup> seized him  
<sup>26</sup> He said therefore                      <sup>27</sup> omit my way                      <sup>28</sup> and in your sin ye shall die  
<sup>29</sup> The Jews therefore said                      <sup>30</sup> shall not believe                      <sup>31</sup> omit he  
<sup>32</sup> They said therefore                      <sup>33</sup> omit And                      <sup>34</sup> said  
<sup>35</sup> How is it that I even speak to you at all?                      <sup>36</sup> speak  
<sup>37</sup> concerning                      <sup>38</sup> nevertheless  
<sup>39</sup> and the things which I heard from him these I speak unto the world  
<sup>40</sup> perceived                      <sup>41</sup> Jesus therefore said                      <sup>42</sup> omit unto them  
<sup>43</sup> lifted on high                      <sup>44</sup> omit he                      <sup>45</sup> of myself I do nothing  
<sup>46</sup> but even as the Father taught me                      <sup>47</sup> he left me not alone, because  
<sup>48</sup> the things that are pleasing to him                      <sup>49</sup> things                      <sup>50</sup> in  
<sup>51</sup> Jesus said therefore                      <sup>52</sup> the                      <sup>53</sup> had believed  
<sup>54</sup> omit on                      <sup>55</sup> shall abide                      <sup>56</sup> ye are truly my disciples

<sup>1</sup> Chap. iii. 17  
<sup>2</sup> xii. 47.  
<sup>3</sup> Chap. v. 30.  
<sup>4</sup> Ver. 29.  
<sup>5</sup> Chap. xiv. 19,  
<sup>6</sup> xvi. 32.  
<sup>7</sup> Deut. xvii.  
<sup>8</sup> 6, xix. 15.  
<sup>9</sup> Chap. v. 37.

<sup>10</sup> Chap. xvi. 3.  
<sup>11</sup> Ver. 55.  
<sup>12</sup> Chap. vii. 28.  
<sup>13</sup> Chap. xiv. 7.  
<sup>14</sup> Mark xii. 41.  
<sup>15</sup> Chap. vii. 30.

<sup>16</sup> See chap.  
<sup>17</sup> ii. 4.  
<sup>18</sup> See chap.  
<sup>19</sup> vii. 34.  
<sup>20</sup> Ver. 24.  
<sup>21</sup> Comp. chap  
<sup>22</sup> vii. 35.

<sup>23</sup> Chap. iii. 31.  
<sup>24</sup> Chap. xv.  
<sup>25</sup> 19, xvii. 14,  
<sup>26</sup> 16; 1 John  
<sup>27</sup> ii. 16, iv. 5.  
<sup>28</sup> Ver. 21.  
<sup>29</sup> Comp. Mark  
<sup>30</sup> xvi. 16.  
<sup>31</sup> Vers. 28, 58,  
<sup>32</sup> chap. xiii. 19.

<sup>33</sup> Chap. vii. 28.  
<sup>34</sup> Ver. 40.  
<sup>35</sup> Chap. iii. 32,  
<sup>36</sup> vii. 16, xii.  
<sup>37</sup> 49, xv. 15.

<sup>38</sup> Chap. iii. 14.  
<sup>39</sup> xii. 32, 34.  
<sup>40</sup> Comp. Acts  
<sup>41</sup> ii. 33.  
<sup>42</sup> Chap. i. 51.  
<sup>43</sup> Chap. v. 19.  
<sup>44</sup> Ver. 16.  
<sup>45</sup> Chap. v. 30.  
<sup>46</sup> Chap. vii.  
<sup>47</sup> 31, x. 42,  
<sup>48</sup> xi. 45.

<sup>49</sup> Comp. chap.  
<sup>50</sup> xv. 7, 8.  
<sup>51</sup> Rom. vi. 18  
<sup>52</sup> viii. 2;  
<sup>53</sup> Gal. v. 1;  
<sup>54</sup> Jas. i. 25.

- 33 make you free. They answered him, <sup>a</sup> We be Abraham's seed, <sup>a</sup> Vers. 37, 39; and were never in bondage to any man: <sup>b</sup> how sayest thou, <sup>c</sup> Matt. iii. 9.
- 34 Ye shall be made <sup>d</sup> free? Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, <sup>e</sup> Whosoever committeth sin <sup>f</sup> is the servant <sup>g</sup> <sup>h</sup> Rom. vi. 16; of sin. And <sup>i</sup> the servant <sup>j</sup> abideth not in the house for ever: <sup>k</sup> 2 Pet. ii. 19; <sup>l</sup> Gal. iv. 30.
- 35 <sup>m</sup> but <sup>n</sup> the Son <sup>o</sup> abideth ever. <sup>p</sup> If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed. I know that ye are <sup>q</sup> Abraham's seed; but <sup>r</sup> ye seek to kill me, because my word <sup>s</sup> Ver. 40, chap. vii. 1.
- 36 hath no place <sup>t</sup> in you. <sup>u</sup> I speak that <sup>v</sup> which I have seen <sup>w</sup> Ver. 26, chap. v. 19.
- 37 with my <sup>x</sup> Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father. <sup>y</sup> They answered and said unto him, <sup>z</sup> Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, <sup>a</sup> If ye were <sup>b</sup> Abraham's <sup>c</sup> Rom. ii. 28, ix. 7; Gal. iii. 7, 29.
- 38 children, ye would <sup>d</sup> do the works of Abraham. But now <sup>e</sup> ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told <sup>f</sup> you <sup>g</sup> the truth, <sup>h</sup> which <sup>i</sup> Chap. i. 24, 17.
- 39 I have heard of God: <sup>j</sup> this did not Abraham. Ye do the deeds <sup>k</sup> of your father. Then <sup>l</sup> said they <sup>m</sup> to him, We be <sup>n</sup> Ver. 26.
- 40 not born of fornication; <sup>o</sup> we have one Father, <sup>p</sup> even God. <sup>q</sup> Isa. lxiii. 16, lxiv. 8.
- 41 Jesus said unto them, <sup>r</sup> If God were your Father, ye would <sup>s</sup> John v. 1.
- 42 love me: for <sup>t</sup> I proceeded forth and came from God; <sup>u</sup> neither <sup>v</sup> Ver. 14.
- 43 <sup>w</sup> came I <sup>x</sup> of myself, but he sent me. <sup>y</sup> Why do ye not understand <sup>z</sup> my speech? <sup>a</sup> even <sup>b</sup> because ye cannot hear my word. <sup>c</sup> Chap. v. 43, vii. 28, 29.
- 44 Ye are <sup>d</sup> of <sup>e</sup> your father the devil, <sup>f</sup> and the lusts <sup>g</sup> of your father ye will do. <sup>h</sup> He <sup>i</sup> was a murderer <sup>j</sup> from the beginning, and <sup>k</sup> abode <sup>l</sup> not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. <sup>m</sup> Matt. xiii. 28; 1 John iii. 8.
- When he speaketh a lie, <sup>n</sup> he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. <sup>o</sup> And <sup>p</sup> because I tell <sup>q</sup> you the truth, <sup>r</sup> <sup>s</sup> Chap. iii. 20, xvi. 8; Eph. v. 13; Rev. iii. 19.
- 45 ye believe me not. Which of you <sup>t</sup> convinceth <sup>u</sup> me of sin? <sup>v</sup> And <sup>w</sup> if I say the <sup>x</sup> truth, why do ye not believe me? <sup>y</sup> He that is of God heareth God's words: <sup>z</sup> ye therefore hear <sup>a</sup> them <sup>b</sup> Chap. x. 26, 27, xviii. 37; 1 John iv. 6.
- 46 not, <sup>c</sup> because ye are not of God. Then answered the Jews, <sup>d</sup> and said unto him, Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and <sup>e</sup> hast a devil? <sup>f</sup> Jesus answered, I have not a devil; <sup>g</sup> <sup>h</sup> See chap. vii. 20.
- 47 but I honour my Father, and ye do dishonour me. And <sup>i</sup> I seek not mine own glory: <sup>j</sup> <sup>k</sup> there is one that seeketh and <sup>l</sup> <sup>m</sup> See chap. vii. 18.
- 48 judgeth. Verily, verily, I say unto you, <sup>n</sup> If a man <sup>o</sup> keep <sup>p</sup> my <sup>q</sup> <sup>r</sup> Chap. xiii. 32; Acts iii. 13; 1 Pet. i. 21.
- 57 and have never yet been slaves to any one <sup>58</sup> become
- 59 Every one that doeth sin <sup>60</sup> a slave <sup>61</sup> slave <sup>62</sup> omit but
- 63 son <sup>64</sup> for ever <sup>65</sup> maketh no way <sup>66</sup> the things <sup>67</sup> the
- 68 do ye also therefore the things which ye heard from the Father <sup>69</sup> are
- 70 omit ye would <sup>71</sup> spoken to <sup>72</sup> which I heard from God
- 73 works <sup>74</sup> omit Then <sup>75</sup> They said <sup>76</sup> were
- 77 for from God I came forth, and am here <sup>78</sup> for also I have not come
- 79 know <sup>80</sup> omit even <sup>81</sup> Ye are of the father who is the devil
- 82 desires <sup>83</sup> it is your will to do <sup>84</sup> man-killer
- 85 stood <sup>86</sup> Whensoever one speaketh the lie
- 87 for for . . . it read because his father also is a liar <sup>88</sup> But
- 89 I say the truth <sup>90</sup> convicteth <sup>91</sup> omit And <sup>92</sup> omit the
- 93 the words of God <sup>94</sup> for this cause ye hear not
- 95 The Jews answered <sup>96</sup> demon <sup>97</sup> But <sup>98</sup> my glory <sup>99</sup> have kept

52 saying,<sup>1</sup> he shall never see<sup>2</sup> death. Then said the Jews<sup>3</sup> unto him, Now we know that 'thou hast a devil.'<sup>4</sup> Abraham<sup>5</sup> is<sup>6</sup> <sup>7</sup> Zech. i. 5 dead,<sup>8</sup> and the prophets; and thou sayest, If a man<sup>9</sup> keep my  
53 saying,<sup>10</sup> he shall never taste of death. 'Art thou greater than<sup>11</sup> <sup>12</sup> Chap. iv. 21 our father Abraham, which is dead?<sup>13</sup> and the prophets are  
54 dead:<sup>14</sup> whom makest thou thyself? Jesus answered,<sup>15</sup> <sup>16</sup> Ver. 50, chap. v. 31. If I honour<sup>17</sup> myself, my honour<sup>18</sup> is nothing: 'it is my Father that  
55 honoureth<sup>19</sup> me; of whom ye say, that he is your God: Yet  
"ye have not known him;<sup>20</sup> but 'I know him: and if I should <sup>21</sup> Ver. 19, Chap. vii. 29  
say, I know him not, I shall be a liar like unto you:<sup>22</sup> but I  
56 know him, <sup>23</sup> and 'keep his saying.<sup>24</sup> 'Your father Abraham <sup>25</sup> Chap. xv. 10  
rejoiced to see<sup>26</sup> my day: and he saw <sup>27</sup> Luke x. 24; Heb. xi. 13. it, and was glad.<sup>28</sup>  
57 Then said the Jews<sup>29</sup> unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years  
58 old, and hast thou seen Abraham? Jesus said unto them,  
Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was,<sup>30</sup> 'I am. <sup>31</sup> Ver. 28, chap. i. 1.  
59 Then<sup>32</sup> 'took they up stones to cast at him:<sup>33</sup> but Jesus<sup>34</sup> 'hid <sup>35</sup> Chap. x. 31, xi. 8.  
himself, and went out of the temple,<sup>36</sup> going through the midst <sup>37</sup> Chap. xii. 36.  
of them, and so passed by.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>1</sup> my word<sup>2</sup> have kept my word<sup>3</sup> glorifieth<sup>4</sup> like unto you, a liar<sup>5</sup> and rejoiced<sup>6</sup> They took up stones therefore that they might cast them upon him<sup>7</sup> and went forth from the temple-courts<sup>8</sup> behold<sup>9</sup> who died<sup>10</sup> And have not got knowledge of him<sup>11</sup> word<sup>12</sup> The Jews therefore said<sup>13</sup> The Jews said<sup>14</sup> glorify<sup>15</sup> exulted that he should see<sup>16</sup> add born<sup>17</sup> omit going . . . by<sup>18</sup> died<sup>19</sup> glory

CONTENTS.—The feast of Tabernacles is closed, and with it the great illumination of the temple-courts, of which the Jews were wont to boast in lofty terms. Starting from this, and from the fact that He is the true light of the world, Jesus reveals more clearly than He had yet done what He Himself is, and by contrast what His opponents are. Everything that He utters assumes its sharpest, most peremptory, most decisive tone. The rage of His adversaries is roused to its highest intensity. The darkness becomes thickest, while the light shines in the midst of it with its greatest brightness. Nothing more can be done to change the darkness into light; henceforward the children of light can only be withdrawn from it. At the close of the chapter Jesus goes out of the temple, leaving the darkness to itself but not overcome by it. The subordinate parts are—(1) vers. 12-20; (2) vers. 21-30; (3) vers. 31-59.

Ver. 12. Again therefore Jesus spake unto them, saying, I am the light of the world. The last thirteen verses (chap. vii. 49-52) have been occupied with an account of the impression made by our Lord's words of promise (chap. vii. 37, 38). This verse really follows chap. vii. 38, containing a second manifestation of Jesus, in a form and manner still connected with the feast which had just ended. As the pouring out of the water had furnished occasion for the promise of the living water, so the imagery of this verse was probably suggested by the illumination of the temple-courts on the evenings of the festival. This illumination proceeded from four great candelabra erected

in the court of the women, and of its brilliancy the Rabbins speak in the highest strains. It formed indeed so marked a feature of the week's rejoicings, that no one can be surprised to find a reference to it in our Lord's words. Like the water poured on the altar, the light may well have had a twofold symbolism, commemorating the mighty guidance of Israel by the pillar of fire, and also prefiguring the light which was to spring up in the times of Messiah (Isa. ix. 2, xlii. 6, etc.). What the pillar of fire had been to Israel in the wilderness, that would Messiah be to His people in the latter days.—He that followeth me shall in no wise walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life. The words 'he that followeth me' are in all probability closely connected with the figure of the first clause of the verse. Around is 'the darkness' of night: only where the pillar of fire moves light shines on all that follow its course,—on all, not on Israel only, for Jesus is 'the light of the world.' The language of both promises is free from every limitation save that which is expressed in 'coming to' Him, 'believing in' Him (chap. vii. 37, 38), and 'following' Him. The special condition mentioned in this verse (when we pass from the associations of the original figure to the practical application of the words) brings out the idea of discipleship and imitation. This includes 'coming' and 'believing.' No true disciple shall walk in the darkness, but shall have as his own inward possession (comp. chap. vii. 38) the light of life,—the light which life gives. Living in Christ, he shall

have the light of Christ (see chap. i. 4). Darkness bears with it the ideas of ignorance, danger, and sin: light implies knowledge, guidance, safety, and holy purity (chap. xii. 35; 1 Thess. v. 4; 1 John i. 5, etc.).

Ver. 13. **The Pharisees therefore said unto him, Thou bearest witness concerning thyself; thy witness is not true.** It seems impossible not to believe that we have here a reminiscence of Christ's own words (chap. v. 31), of which His enemies now take hold, that they may turn them against Himself. Since the discourse of chap. v., the Pharisees of Jerusalem have never possessed so favourable an opportunity of thus seeking to repel the claims which Jesus asserts. As used by our Lord (in chap. v.), the words signify that, if His testimony concerning Himself stood alone, not only would it (according to all laws of evidence) be invalid, but it would be untrue,—as the very thought of such unsupported witness would conflict with the fundamental truth of chap. v. 19. Here the words, as applied by His foes, are intended to have the same meaning: His solitary testimony has no validity, and, by His own confession, is untrue.

Ver. 14. **Jesus answered and said unto them, Even if I bear witness concerning myself, my witness is true: because I know whence I came, and whither I go; but ye know not whence I come, or whither I go.** A little later (ver. 17), Jesus gives an answer similar to the purport of His words in chap. v. His Father beareth witness of Him, and His Father's testimony is ever present. But here He rebukes their judgment of Him. In a sense (ver. 17), their requirement of other testimony is valid; but first He must reject their application to Him of a principle of judgment which is valid in regard to men like themselves. Amongst men of like nature—those who are but men—such judgment is true: when applied to Jesus it fails. Men who know but in part may be self-deceivers, even if they are true men; hence their word needs support. He who knows with unerring certainty that He comes from the Father and is going to the Father may bear witness of Himself, and His testimony is valid and true. He who thus comes from God cannot but speak with a self-evidencing power,—self-evidencing to all who are willing to see and hear. This willingness the Pharisees had not, and hence He adds, 'Ye know not whence I come, or whither I go.' The change from 'I came' to 'I come' is remarkable, but is easily explained. The past fact ('I came') is not one which the Pharisees could know, except by inference: His present mission from the Father ('I come') should have been discerned by all who saw His works and heard His words; and every one who recognised that He cometh from the Father must understand His meaning when He says 'I go' to Him that sent me. On 'I come' comp. vii. 28.

Ver. 15. **Ye judge after the flesh.** They had judged Him by mere outward appearance, and according to their own merely human thoughts and wishes. Having formed for themselves without patient study of the Scriptures, and thus without the guidance of the Spirit of God, their conception of Messiah and of His kingdom, they rejected Jesus because He did not answer their expectation. But for this, the Divine witness in Him would have reached their hearts.—I judge

no one. They judged according to their own nature,—standing alone, without the guidance of the Father, not taking the Father along with them in judging, and thus not judging 'righteous judgment' (vii. 24). Jesus judgeth no man. The fifth chapter has prepared us for such words as these. Here, as there, they do not exclude all judgment, but all *sole* judgment (see ver. 16): it is not He that judgeth, but rather the Father who judgeth in Him. Chap. v. 22 and this verse are not discordant: between the Father, the ultimate source of judgment, and those who are judged is the Son, to whom the Father hath given authority to do judgment, but who doeth nothing save in and with the Father. The 'I' is thus emphatic, equivalent to 'I by myself' or 'I without the Father.'

Ver. 16. **But even if I judge, my judgment is true: because I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me.** Because in no action is He alone, even if He judges His judgment is true; it is a *real* judgment, a judgment corresponding, not to outward appearance, but to the eternal reality of things, because according to the Father's will. The assertion of this verse, that the Father is ever with Him, corresponds to the words, 'I know whence I came,' in ver. 14: the link which binds together all these verses is His constant and perfect knowledge that the Father is with Him and in Him. In this lies the validity of His witness: in this is involved the condemnation of His foes.

Ver. 17. **But in your own law also it is written that the witness of two men is true.** In the very law which they magnified, on which they take their stand, as they accuse Him of breaking the law, and declare that all who follow him are ignorant of the law (chap. vii. 49, etc.), this principle is laid down (Deut. xvii. 6, xix. 15). An emphasis is made to rest on 'men' to prepare for the next verse. The words 'your own law' have been understood as a proof that Jesus feels that He is not a Jew, but without reason. The words flow from the fact that it is His purpose to show that the principle upon which He proceeded was founded in the law which they themselves so highly honoured, and the rules of which they were not entitled to neglect. They thus at once magnify the law and are an *argumentum ad hominem*.

Ver. 18. **I am he that beareth witness concerning myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness concerning me.** In all the Son's witness concerning Himself, it is the Father that beareth witness concerning Him. This is the teaching of chap. v., and it is easy to see that the witness may with equal truth be spoken of as that of Two, or as that borne by One (the Father). In thus speaking to His enemies of a twofold witness, He may mean either (1) that they should themselves have discerned in Him, over and above that which in a holy human prophet they would have accepted as 'witness,' a higher presence which could only be Divine; and that, had they done this, they could never have thought of His word as standing alone:—or (2) that in the witness which He had borne they had dreamed of unsupported words only because they could not attain to that perfect knowledge which He alone possessed. They heard and saw one witness only: to His consciousness there were two. The first of these two views is by much the more probable. Jesus appeals to two facts which they *ought* to have

known, that He was the expression of the Father, and that what He was the Father was. These were two wholly separate and independent things, although the validity of each depended upon that consciousness of the Divine in them which they had silenced. There is thus here no *petitio principii* as has been thought even by distinguished commentators.

Ver. 19. They said therefore unto him, Where is thy Father? If He is to add His witness to Thine, let Him appear and bear His testimony. The words are those of men who will not seek to enter into the meaning of the Speaker. As they judge men 'according to the flesh,' they will go no farther than the literal import of the words. But after what they have heard and seen in Jesus, such action cannot consist with sincerity: it is not only to enemies but to hypocrites that He speaks.—Jesus answered, Ye know neither me, nor my Father: if ye knew me, ye would know my Father also. They professed not to know who is His Father. In truth they were without any real knowledge, not of the Father only, but of Jesus Himself. Had they, through receiving and believing His words, attained such knowledge of Him, they would have attained in Him the revelation of the Father also.

Ver. 20. These words spake he in the treasury, teaching in the temple-courts: and no man seized him, because his hour was not yet come. Again His adversaries were overawed: though He was teaching within the precincts of the temple, in the very place of their power, no one laid hands on Him. The Treasury was in the court of the women, the very place in which the rejoicings we have described (see chap. vii. 37) took place. This gives some confirmation to the view we have taken of ver. 12, as referring to the illumination in this court.

Ver. 21. He said therefore again unto them, I go, and ye shall seek me, and in your sin ye shall die: whither I go, ye cannot come. The conflict of Jesus with His opponents has now passed into a higher stage. It is no longer with the Pharisees merely (ver. 13), but with the Jews (ver. 22). The witness, too, which Jesus now bears regarding Himself has reference to the last things, both for Himself and for them. It is vain however to inquire when the discourse was thus continued: the bond is one rather of thought than of date. The main object of these words is judgment: hence Jesus does not linger on the thought of His own departure, but on that of the fate awaiting them. The time will come when they will seek Him, but in vain. He is not speaking of the seeking of faith or of repentance, but (as before in chap. vii. 34) of the awakening (too late) to need and danger,—an awakening not accompanied by the forsaking of sin, for He adds, 'in your sin' (i.e. your state of sin, comp. ver. 24) 'ye shall die.'

Ver. 22. The Jews therefore said, Will he kill himself? because he saith, Whither I go ye cannot come. Before (chap. vii. 35) their answer had been, Will He go to Gentiles? The change here shows how much farther the conflict has advanced. Will He go to the realms of the dead, they ask,—to that darkest and most dreadful region reserved for those who take their own life, a region where true Israelites cannot come? Their ignorance of themselves is as profound as their ignorance of Jesus. Jesus had made His meaning

plain (chap. vii. 33), but they wilfully blind themselves. Hence only one answer is possible now.

Vers. 23, 24. And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world. I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins; for if ye shall not believe that I am, ye shall die in your sins. The second of these verses is important as fixing the meaning of the first. The words, 'I said that ye shall die in your sins,' are so connected both with what precedes (by means of 'therefore') and with what follows (by means of 'for'), that the *ground* of this sentence of death is brought under our notice by each of these particles,—it is to be found in the unbelief of which the following clause speaks, and in the fact stated in the preceding verse. As then this ground of condemnation is distinctly *moral* (ver. 24), the expressions in ver. 23 must also have a moral and not a fatalistic meaning. The condemnation results from something in the men themselves, not from any original necessity; should they believe, no longer would Jesus say to them, Ye are from beneath. The origin of their spirit and action, dominated by unbelief, is to be sought, not above, but beneath,—not in heaven, but in earth: nay rather (for the thought distinctly expressed in ver. 44 is implicitly present here also), whereas He whom they are in thought consigning to the lowest depths of woe and punishment is of God, they are of the devil. It is at first sight difficult to believe that the sense does not sink but really rises in the second half of ver. 23, and yet the whole structure of this Gospel teaches us that it must be so. If, however, we remember the *moral* reference of the terms of the verse, an explanation soon suggests itself: for the latter clause expresses much more distinctly than the former the element of deliberate choice. The first might be thought to point to origin only, did not the second show that it implies an evil nature retained by evil choice. From this second clause we see clearly that Jesus speaks of a voluntary association,—of the dependence of their spirit on the evil principles belonging to 'this world.' Because such is their self-chosen state, Jesus has told them that their sins—the sins which manifest the nature of every one who is of this world—shall bring them ruin: for nothing but belief in Him who is from above can save them from dying in their sins. His words, it will be seen, grow more and more distinct in their awful import, and yet they are words of mercy: for the meaning is not, Except ye are *now* believers, the sentence is passed,—but, Except ye shall believe (most literally 'shall have believed'): even now they may receive Him, and the sentence will have no existence for them.—But the most striking point in this verse is the mode in which our Lord expresses the object of belief,—'Except ye shall believe that I am.' Something apparently like this has occurred before in chap. iv. 26; but the two cases are really widely different. There the word 'Messiah' has just been spoken, and the answer, 'It is I,' is perfectly plain in its meaning. Here there is no such word in the context; and to assume an ellipsis, and then supply the very word on which all the emphasis must rest, is surely a most dangerous step: to act thus is not to bring out the meaning of the passage, but to bring our own meaning into it. Besides, as we have already seen, our Lord is wont elsewhere to use the expression 'I am' in a very emphatic sense (see

chap. vii. 34, etc.), with distinct reference to that continuous, unchanging existence which only He who is Divine can claim. The most remarkable example of these exalted words is found in the 58th verse of this chapter (comp. also ver. 28). Without forestalling this, however (but referring to the note on that verse for some points connected with the full explanation), we may safely say that it is of His Divine Being that Jesus here speaks. The thought of existence is clearly present in the verse. 'Ye shall die,' He says, 'unless ye shall have been brought to see in me—not what the impious words of ver. 22 imply, but—One who is,—who, belonging to the realms above, possesses life—who, being of God, has life as His own and as His own gift.' So understood, our Lord's words speak of belief, not directly in His Messiahship, but in that other nature of His, that Divine nature, on His possession of which He makes all His other claims to rest. Observe in ver. 24 as compared with ver. 21 not only the mention of 'sins' instead of 'sin' (comp. on ver. 21), but also the change of place given to 'ye shall die' in ver. 21 what led to their fate, here their fate itself, being the prominent thought.

Ver. 25. *They said therefore unto him, Who art thou?* Had they been patient, willing listeners, they would have seen His meaning; but now He seems to them to have left out the one essential word, in thus saying, 'Except ye shall believe that I am.' What is that word? 'Who art thou?' The tone of the preceding words makes it certain that the question is one of impatience and scorn, not of a spirit eager and ready to learn. This is a point of importance, as throwing light on our Lord's reply.—*Jesus said unto them, How is it that I even speak to you at all?* The true nature and meaning of this reply are points on which the greatest difference of opinion has existed and still exists. The question is one of translation, not interpretation merely; and a discussion on a matter of Greek philology would be out of place here. The first words of the sentence are 'The beginning;' and many have endeavoured to retain these words in translation, but in very different ways. Some have taken 'The beginning' as a name applied by our Lord to Himself; others understand the words adverbially, as meaning 'in the beginning,' 'from the very first,' 'before all things.' But none of these explanations can be obtained without doing violence to the Greek; and we are therefore bound to consider them all untenable. Even if they were possible renderings, they would present a serious difficulty to an attentive student of the words of Jesus, especially as contained in this Gospel. Our Lord is not wont directly to answer a question so presented. His whole treatment of 'the Jews' is based on the fact that He had given them abundant evidence regarding Himself and His work. They who will not see must rest in their blindness (chap. ix. 39). No sign from heaven shall be wrought at the bidding of those to whom no former signs have brought instruction (Matt. xvi. 1, 2): certainly no direct answer will be vouchsafed to men who, having heard all that He has said before, have just shown themselves able awfully to pervert His simplest sayings. One line of translation only seems to be allowed by the Greek,—that which takes the words as a question (or exclamation), and gives to the first words ('the beginning') a meaning which in such sentences they often bear, viz. 'at all' (as

'Does he act at all?' is equivalent to 'Does he even make a beginning of action?'). This is the interpretation which the early Greek writers Cyril of Alexandria and Chrysostom gave to the words; and we cannot but lay stress on the fact that such men, who habitually spoke Greek, seem not to have thought of any other meaning. Whether the sentence is an exclamation or a question, the general sense is the same, viz. *Why am I even speaking to you at all?* Much has He to say concerning them (ver. 26) and to judge; but why does He any longer speak to men who will not understand His word? The words remind us of Matt. xvii. 17, 'O faithless and perverse generation! How long shall I be with you? How long shall I suffer you?' And yet those words were said to slow-minded Galileans, not to the hostile 'Jews.'

Ver. 26. *I have many things to speak and to judge concerning you.* It is unavailing to speak to them, for they will not believe. Many things has He to speak concerning them, and (since every word regarding them in the condition they had chosen must be one of judgment) to judge also.—*Nevertheless he that sent me is true; and the things which I heard from him, these I speak unto the world.* To all that He says they may turn a deaf ear; 'Nevertheless,' Jesus adds, 'He that sent me is true, and the words which I have heard from Him, these and no others do I speak unto the world,—the world, to which you belong' (ver. 23). The Jews may disbelieve; His judgment may seem severe; but the words are God's words, and they are true.

This seems the simplest view of this difficult verse; for the prominence which the second clause ('Nevertheless . . . true') gives to the thought of truth seems to imply that the contrast is with the preceding thought of unbelief (vers. 24, 25). Three other explanations are worthy of consideration—(1) I have many things . . . but, many as they are, they are true. (2) I have many things . . . but I will not keep them back, for I faithfully declare the words which . . . (3) I have many things . . . but I will not say them now: the things which I have heard from Him that sent me must be first declared. The first of these seems to miss the sharp emphasis of the 'Nevertheless;' the second and third to miss (though in different degrees) the force of the middle clause, 'Nevertheless He that sent me is true.'

Ver. 27. *They perceived not that he spake to them of the Father.* This statement of the Evangelist is very remarkable; and, as it is so different from anything we might have expected, its importance as a guide and correction is the greater. In this section (beginning at ver. 21) He has not made mention of 'the Father.' In the section which precedes, however (vers. 12-20), the word occurs several times. First Jesus speaks of 'the Father which sent me' (vers. 16, 18): in their answer the Jews show how they had understood His words, by saying, 'Where is thy Father?' and in replying to their question Jesus also speaks, not of 'the Father,' but of 'my Father.' So far as these two sections are concerned, therefore, there is nothing to show that His hearers had understood Him to make distinct mention of 'the Father,' in the absolute sense,—a name which, probably, every Israelite would have received as belonging to God alone. (If we look back at earlier chapters, we shall find that the passages

have been few in which 'the Father' is spoken of. The fifth chapter must be left out of consideration, for the whole discourse is dominated by the thought of personal Sonship. The same may be said of chap. iii. 35. There remain only the words addressed to the woman of Samaria, chap. iv. 21, and the discourses in Galilee related in chap. vi.) Hence—though we might have overlooked the fact but for the Evangelist's timely words—we cannot feel great surprise that these hearers had not yet perceived that Jesus was making mention of 'the Father.' The words, 'I am from above,' 'He that sent me,' must have suggested to those who heard that He claimed a Divine mission; but men familiar with the mission of a prophet might concede so much without understanding that the last words of Jesus ('the things which I heard from Him I speak unto the world') implied an infinitely higher and closer relation to Him whom they worshipped, whom Jesus revealed as 'the Father.' In this Name and in the words just spoken is contained the whole economy of grace.

Ver. 28. **Jesus therefore said, When ye have lifted on high the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am, and that of myself I do nothing; but even as the Father taught me, I speak these things.** They know not the truth now: when through their own deed the Son of man has been raised on high, their eyes will be opened, they will see what they have done, and will then know that His words were true, that the claims which they resisted the Father Himself has ratified. The 'lifting on high' includes both the death and the glorification of Jesus, though the latter meaning only would be understood as yet (see the note on chap. iii. 14). Some prefer to place a stop at the word *am*, and to take the clauses that follow as independent. This view, however, seems much less natural than the other. The three parallel clauses—containing the thoughts of (1) pure existence (as to what is implied in this, see ver. 24), (2) continued dependence on the Father in all action (see chap. v. 19, 20), and (3), as a part of such action, speaking in constant harmony with the Father's will and teaching (chap. v. 30, ver. 26)—express the claims made by Jesus, the truth of which (of each and of all) will be established when He is 'lifted up on high.'

Ver. 29. **And he that sent me is with me: he left me not alone, because I do always the things that are pleasing to him.** The words, 'I heard' (ver. 26), 'taught' (ver. 28), point back to the past, laying stress on the Divine commission received: they must not be so understood as to exclude a present fellowship with the Father, 'He that sent me is with me.' When He sent the Son, He sent Him not away from Himself,—not for a moment did He leave Him alone. The abiding presence of the Father is the consequence and the sign of the Son's habitual performance of the Father's will. In all this Jesus is speaking as the Son of man, as the Sent of the Father. It is most interesting to compare the corresponding words of chap. v., where the subject throughout is the Son of God. It will be seen how prominent are two thoughts in this chapter,—the association of Jesus with the Father who sent Him (vers. 16, 18, 23, 26, 28, 29, 38, 40, 42, 47, 54, 55), and the strong moral contrast between Jesus and the Jews (vers. 15, 21, 23, 24, 37, 38, 40, etc.). The

observance of this will make clearer the links connecting the several parts.

Ver. 30. **As he spake these things, many believed in him.** We are not told to what class these belonged. The latter part of the chapter shows how completely 'the Jews' had hardened themselves: probably therefore these believers mainly belonged to the general body of the hearers, and not (in any large proportion) to 'the Jews.' Once more then we have an illustration of that twofold effect of our Lord's teaching which John so frequently portrays.

Ver. 31. **Jesus said therefore to the Jews which had believed him.** The word 'therefore' closely joins this section with the last. Are we then to regard the Jews of this verse as included in the 'many' of the last? Certainly not, because of the essential difference between the expressions used in the two verses,—'believed in him' and 'believed him.' The former denotes a true faith in Jesus, such an acceptance of Him as includes a surrender of the heart, the 'self,' to Him; the latter, an acceptance of His words as true. Those who 'believed Him' were in the way towards the higher faith, but yet might be very far from the attainment of that goal. The impression produced by the last words spoken by Jesus appears to have been very great, bringing many to the position of full discipleship, and even convincing some of the hostile Jews themselves that they had been opposing one whose words were true, and whose claims on their obedience were just and right. These men stand between the two companies,—the Jews with whom they had been associated, and the believers who had joined themselves to the Lord. Will they draw nearer to Him and '*believe in Him*,' or will they return to His enemies? The words which Jesus now speaks, to instruct and to encourage, prove to be the test of their faith.—**If ye shall abide in my word, ye are truly my disciples.** They believed His word; if they abide in this word of His,—clinging to it, continuing under its influence, the word will be to them a revelation of Jesus, and will assert its power. Note the significance ever attached in this Gospel to the word of Jesus. As He, the Word, reveals the Father, and leads to the Father, so His own word reveals Himself, and draws men to Himself through (so teaches the fuller revelation) the power of the Spirit of Truth.

Ver. 32. **And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.** If they shall abide in the word of Jesus, it will be shown that they have begun a true discipleship, and the word in which they abide shall make known to them the truth. So far, there is nothing that these imperfect disciples will not gladly hear. But Jesus read in their hearts a false interpretation of His work and their own needs. He came as Saviour (chap. iii. 16, 36, iv. 42, v. 40), not as Teacher only: in this very chapter He has spoken of faith in Himself as delivering from death in sins (ver. 24). Here the figure is changed from that of future death to that of present and continued bondage: 'the truth' shall be the means of giving freedom. There is no difficulty in these words: such appropriation of the truth found in the words of Jesus is but another representation of faith in Him who is the Giver of freedom.

Ver. 33. **They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and have never yet been slaves to**

any one: how sayest thou, Ye shall become free? The promise 'shall make you free' cannot but imply that now they have no freedom, but are slaves. This thought they indignantly repel, for they are Abraham's seed! What is the true meaning of the next words is a question much disputed. It is hardly possible that they refer directly to *national* freedom, for the first words of the Decalogue speak of their deliverance from the house of bondage, and this history had often been repeated. Nor can we think that the Jews are simply appealing to the law which made it impossible for an Israelite to be kept in (continued) bondage. The former supposition involves too bold a falsehood; the latter, too prosaic and strained an interpretation in a context which contains no hint of civil rights. And yet there is truth in both. To be of Abraham's seed and to be a slave were discordant ideas. To Abraham was given the promise that he should be 'heir of the world' (Rom. iv. 13): the Divine nobility of his descendants was only brought out more clearly by their frequent adverse fortune. There was a religious pre-eminence above all nations of the world,—a freedom which no external circumstances could affect. National independence was natural (though not always enjoyed), because of this Divinely-given honour: in the same gift of God lay the principle of the Israelite's civil freedom. Least of all (they thought) could they, whose boast was that the truth was theirs, be held in a slavery from which the truth should free them.

Ver. 34. **Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Every one that doeth sin is a slave of sin.** Jesus directs them to a slavery of which they have not thought,—slavery to sin. Every one who is living a life of sin is a slave; each act of sin is no mere accident of his life, but a token of its nature, a mark of a bondage in which he is continually held. The word 'doeth' is not the same as that which is used in chap. iii. 20, v. 29 in connection with evil: that had reference to the commission of particular acts, this to the general course of life, when sin is *chosen*.—'Evil be thou my good.' The thought is best illustrated by Rom. vi. and (especially) vii.

Ver. 35. **And the slave abideth not in the house for ever: the son abideth for ever.** The Jews believed that they were free, the sons of God; and that, as such, they were permanent possessors of His house, and thus permanent recipients of His favour and love, inheritors of eternal life. Not so. In all this they deceive themselves. They are not God's sons, but slaves of sin. As such they have no more real hold of the house of God, with its present and eternal privileges, than a slave has of the privileges of the house in which he is a slave. A son only can claim a place in the house and the possession of what belongs to the house, as a right permanent, uninterrupted, as long as he is a son. In all this, no doubt, there lies a reference to their own history. As the son of the bondwoman Hagar in the house of Abraham, so were they in the house of God: as Ishmael (though Abraham's seed) was driven forth, having no place beside the son who was free, so must they who claimed to be Abraham's seed be cast out, if they are slaves of sin.

Ver. 36. **If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.** It is manifestly a

special freedom that is here thought of,—freedom gained by becoming sons, and thus gaining all that belongs to the position of a son, retaining for ever a connection with the Father's house. One only can give this freedom, for One only can give this Sonship,—He who is the Son (see chap. i. 12). 'Free indeed,' not in appearance only, as a favoured slave might seem for a time to hold the place of a son in the house: 'free indeed,' because receiving the freedom and sonship from One who 'remains in the house for ever,' and never loses the rights of the Son. Ver. 33 speaks of the means ('the truth'), this verse of the Giver of freedom ('the Son'). The word here rendered 'indeed' is a very remarkable one: it is used nowhere else in the writings of John. Closely connected with the verb 'I am' of ver. 28, it is hardly possible to avoid the impression that it is designedly employed in order to bring out that closeness of relation between the sons of God and the Son which is so striking a part of the teaching of this chapter.

Ver. 37. **I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word maketh no way in you.** Again our Lord takes up their assertion that they are Abraham's seed. He has answered it by a parable: He speaks now in plainer words, repeating their familiar boast, that He may place in strongest contrast the spirit they had shown themselves to possess. 'Ye seek to kill me,' He says, uniting them with the whole body from which a little before they seemed to be severed; for too clearly did He see that the severance was but partial and altogether transient. His word had entered their hearts, and for a moment they had moved towards Him; but it made no way there, its progress was immediately stayed, and they were numbered again with 'the Jews,' His foes. Hence the increasing severity of what is immediately to follow.

Ver. 38. **I speak the things which I have seen with the Father: do ye also therefore the things which ye heard from the Father.** One last exhortation Jesus will offer before entirely giving up these 'Jews who had believed Him.' His word had entered their heart but had made no way: let them give it free course now. He, the Son, who alone can give them freedom and sonship by the truth revealed in His word (vers. 32, 36), has in that word spoken to them the things which He saw with the Father (another mode of expressing the same truth as is declared in chap. iii. 13). With design He says '*the* Father,' not '*my* Father;' for the word has been spoken to them in order that God who is His Father may become their Father,—in other words, that the Son may give them sonship. For this very purpose the Father sent Him to declare the word: this He has done, so that what they had heard from Jesus they had heard from the Father. Let them *do* that which they have heard and the blessing of sonship shall be theirs. (It is interesting to compare the 'knowing' which gives freedom (ver. 32) with this command to 'do' what they had heard. In effect the same result is promised, so that the *knowledge* spoken of must be such as involves *doing*,—no barren knowledge, but one that grasps and moulds the life.) But we must not overlook the 'therefore' which binds together the two parts of the verse. In the execution of the design of God, to make men His sons and thus become sons of 'the Father,' two things are necessary: the Son (the



'Word') declares the truth of God; men receive the word of the Son, know it—with that knowledge which implies both faith and action—and become the sons of God. The Son has been faithful to His mission,—this the first clause declares: let them *therefore* be faithful to their part, and the blessing will be theirs.—The more common view of this verse assumes that in the second clause Jesus speaks of another father. This is very unlikely, as the pronoun *your* is not inserted until a later verse (ver. 41). There are also two other reasons for preferring the interpretation given above: (1) It is hard to believe that Jesus, so tender in His dealing with even the germs of true faith, has already passed into His severest condemnation of 'the Jews who had believed Him.' No word has been spoken by them since that recorded in ver. 33, and it had shown blindness and self-deception, but not hopeless antagonism. True, He sees that in their hearts they are relapsing into their former state; but may we not well believe that He will make one other effort to instruct and save? (2) As we have already seen (ver. 27), in our Lord's words '*the Father*' is a Name used with great significance and fulness of meaning, especially in this chapter. This is duly recognised in the explanation we are now seeking to defend, and in that alone.—It is remarkable that in this verse Jesus describes Himself as speaking what He has *seen with the Father*, while He exhorts them to do what they have *heard from the Father*. But the words are deliberately chosen, and they confirm the interpretation now given. As the Eternal Son, Jesus alone could have the first words spoken of Him. The second appropriately describe the state of those who had not 'seen, who had only 'heard.' The difference, in short, flows from that difference between the Son and all other sons which abides even in the midst of similarity of position: the One has an eternal, the others have only a derived, Sonship.

Ver. 39. **They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father.** This answer shows how their minds are closing against the word of Jesus. Had they been willing to recognise the true meaning of '*the Father*' in the first clause (of ver. 38), they might have seen what the same Name implied for them in the later words. But whilst He spoke of God and sought to lead them upwards, they, proud of their ancestry and content with Jewish privilege, will think of no other father than Abraham. Yet plainer words therefore must be used to make them understand the truth.—**Jesus saith unto them, If ye are Abraham's children, do the works of Abraham.** There is no true sonship (in the sense in which Jesus is dwelling on the idea) where there is not likeness. Descent from Abraham cannot be a source of present honour and blessing to those who do not Abraham's works. They are Abraham's 'seed' (ver. 37), not his 'children' (comp. I. 12).

Ver. 40. **But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath spoken to you the truth, which I heard from God: this did not Abraham.** The assertions of vers. 37, 38 are reiterated, but now with a simple directness that cannot be misunderstood (thus Jesus no longer speaks of '*the Father*' but of God), and with a distinct expression of the contrast ('this did not Abraham') which in ver. 37 has been merely implied. True kindred to Abraham is therefore impossible in their case.

Ver. 41. **Ye do the works of your father.** Yet

the principle of ver. 39 cannot but be true: certainly they are doing the works of *their father*.—**They said to him, We were not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God.** The words of Jesus have made two things clear:—(1) He is not referring to national origin, but to spiritual descent; and (2) the father whose sons Jesus declares them to be is not good but evil. In answer to this they indignantly assert that they are sons of God. Their spiritual is as undoubted as their natural descent. 'Whatever may be the case with others (the word "*we*" is strongly emphatic), there is no stain on our origin.' We cannot but think that some antithesis is distinctly present to the thought of the Jews as they use the words '*we*' and '*one*.' And if we bear in mind the regular meaning which the word '*fornication*' bears in Old Testament prophecy, when used in such a connection as this, viz. the unholy alliance with idols instead of Jehovah (Jer. iii. 1, etc.), it will appear very probable that ver. 48 gives the clue to the meaning here. Jesus was called a Samaritan. Samaritans were taunted with their descent from men who 'feared Jehovah and served their own gods' (2 Kings xvii. 33). This thought, not yet plainly expressed, but existing in their minds, explains at once the emphatic '*we*,' the reference to '*fornication*,' and the stress laid on '*one Father*.'

Ver. 42. **Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for from God I came forth, and am here, for also I have not come of myself, but he sent me.** Again Jesus applies the same principle to test their claim. Were they true children of God, then they would love whomsoever God loves. But this they do not, for they love not Him who came forth from God and whom God sent. The words in which Jesus speaks of His relation to God are remarkable. Alike in His *Incarnation*, in His whole *manifestation* to the world, and in His *mission*, He sustains the same relation to the Father: all is from and of the Father. This intimate relation implies the love on which the argument is made to rest.

Ver. 43. **Why do ye not know my speech? Because ye cannot hear my word.** There is a subtle difference between '*word*' and '*speech*,' the former properly referring to substance, the latter to the form. (Thus in Matt. xxvi. 73, when the same word is used, it is said that Peter's Galilean '*speech*' betrayed him.) Did they hear His word, were they really sons of God, they would recognise his speech, and the indications (if we may so speak) contained in it of the speech of that heavenly realm from which He came. But they could not bear to hear His word: what He taught was hateful to them, though it was the truth which He heard from God (ver. 40). This antipathy to the substance of what He said made any recognition of the teaching as bearing on itself manifest tokens of Divine origin impossible.

Ver. 44. **Ye are of the father who is the devil, and the desires of your father it is your will to do.** It seems desirable to preserve in translation the expression '*the father*' (for '*your*' is not found in the Greek), because it seems to be our Lord's design to set this in strongest contrast to the name which He has used with most significant emphasis, '*the Father*' (see the notes on vers. 27 and 38). All the desires of this *their father* it was their will to do. Their works, deliberately chosen, answered to their parentage: hence their seeking

to kill Jesus (vers. 37, 40), and their inability to listen to His word (ver. 43).—**He was a man-killer from the beginning, and stood not in the truth.** Well may they seek to kill Jesus, for their father, the devil, was a man-killer from the beginning of his dealings with mankind. His seduction of mankind was itself a murder, severing man from the life of God, and bringing in the evil that has been the cause of every crime. Thus he is the shedder 'of all the righteous blood shed upon the earth.' Not only was he a man-killer, but he 'stood not in the truth.'<sup>1</sup> It does not seem likely that these words refer to the fall of the angels who kept not their first estate,<sup>2</sup> for then surely the order of the clauses would have been reversed. Throughout all past human history the devil shunned 'the truth,' took his stand without the borders of 'the truth,' because this action alone is suitable to his essential (though not original) nature.—**Because there is no truth in him.** His hatred of 'the truth' springs from this, that he is not true; 'truth' (now used without the article) is not in him; and his own hatred of the truth is transmitted to his children, who cannot hear the word of Jesus (ver. 43).—**Whosoever one speaketh the lie, he speaketh of his own, because his father also is a liar.** Whosoever a man who is a child of the devil uttereth falsehood, he is giving forth what by very nature belongs to him, what is his peculiar property by right of kindred and inheritance,—because his father also, the devil, is a liar.

Ver. 45. **But because I say the truth, ye believe me not.** They loved the lie, because their father was a liar, and his desires it was their will to do. Such was their love for falsehood (even as their father 'stood not in the truth'), that, because Jesus said the truth, they believed Him not. The word 'I' is emphatic, marking again the contrast between them and Him.

Ver. 46. **Which of you convicteth me of sin?** No charge of sin could any one of them bring home to Him, no responsive consciousness of sin could any one awaken in His breast. These words are implicitly an assertion of His perfect sinlessness; and His enemies are silent.—**If I say truth, why do ye not believe me?** Their knowledge of His sinless life took from them all pretext for their disbelief. We know that His words brought their own evidence to those who loved the truth. The true answer to this question then must be that they loved falsehood. But this answer they would never give. The tone of this verse clearly shows that what has been said of their father the devil related not to necessity of nature, but to deliberate choice (see note on ver. 23), for such an appeal was intended, and would be understood, to imply condemnation of those who thus wilfully refused to believe. The same thought is present in the following verse.

Ver. 47. **He that is of God heareth the words of God: for this cause ye hear not, because ye are not of God.** As in ver. 43, the word *hear* has the meaning *listen to*, so that the thought of receiving and believing is implied. He that is of God, and he alone, thus listens to the words of God: recognising their origin, willing to receive their teaching, he takes them into his heart.

Ver. 48. **The Jews answered and said unto him, Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan,**

**and hast a demon?** To say that Jews were children of the devil seemed an insult, not to themselves only, but to God, whose children they believed themselves to be. No one but a Samaritan, filled with jealous hatred of the people of God, or one in whom dwelt a demon, one of the spirits whose sole aim was the subversion of God's kingdom, could utter such words as these. It is possible that the Jews may have heard something of our Lord's short sojourn in Samaria, and of the favour which He had then shown to that despised people: such a parable as that of the Good Samaritan (which was spoken at a time not far distant from that to which this chapter relates) may have been so used by enemies as to give colour to an accusation of favouring Samaria and slighting Judea. At all events it is clear that the name 'Samaritan' was now frequently given to our Lord as a term of reproach.—We must not overlook the fact that those who are now addressing Jesus are 'the Jews,'—not a part (ver. 31), but the Jews as a body.

Ver. 49. **Jesus answered, I have not a demon; but I honour my Father, and ye do dishonour me.** His answer is a simple denial of the graver accusation of the two, and also such an assertion regarding His thought and purpose as was equivalent to a denial of all such charges. He honours His Father,—even in the very words which had seemed to them an insult to God Himself. 'It is ye,' He adds, 'that are dishonouring me:' it is not I who (like Samaritans) dishonour you.

Ver. 50. **But I seek not my glory: there is one that seeketh and judgeth.** He will not protest against the dishonour they offer Him: His cause is in the Father's hand. That glory which He seeks not for Himself, the Father seeks to give Him. The Father is deciding, and will decide between His enemies and Himself.

Ver. 51. **Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man have kept my word, he shall never behold death.** The solemn introductory words indicate that the discourse is taking a higher strain: once before they have been used in this chapter, in ver. 34 (but to a part only of 'the Jews'), and once again we shall meet with them (ver. 58). In ver. 34 Jesus is speaking of *slavery* from which He frees; here of *death* which He abolishes (2 Tim. i. 10). In the former case the means of deliverance is continuing in the word of Jesus and knowing the truth (see ver. 32); here He gives the promise to him that has 'kept His word,'—has received it, hidden it in his heart, and observed it in his life (see ver. 37, also chap. xiv. 15, etc.). The thought here is substantially the same as in chap. vi. 50 (compare also chap. iv. 14, v. 24, vi. 51), where we read of the living bread given that a man may eat of it and not die. That passage presents one side of the condition, the close fellowship of the believer with Jesus Himself, of which eating is the symbol; this presents another side, the believing reception of His word (which reveals Himself), and the practical and continued observance of the precepts therein contained. In chap. vi. 50, the words 'may not die' do not seem to have been misunderstood,—possibly because so near the promise of 'eternal life,' which suggested a figurative meaning, possibly because of a difference in the mood and disposition of the hearers. In neither place did Jesus promise that they who are His shall not pass through the grave, but that to them death shall

<sup>1</sup> Not 'standeth': the word is probably an imperfect (of *stand*).

not be death,—in death itself they shall live (see chap. xi. 26).

Vers. 52, 53. The Jews said unto him, Now we know that thou hast a demon. Abraham died, and the prophets; and thou sayest, If a man have kept my word, he shall never taste of death. Art thou greater than our father Abraham, who died? and the prophets died: whom makest thou thyself? The word 'now' looks back to ver. 48. 'Even if we were too hasty then, *now* we have learnt from thine own words that our charge is true.' In attributing to His word a power to preserve His followers from that which had come upon the prophets, and even on Abraham himself, He is clearly placing Himself above Abraham and the prophets. Whom then is He making Himself?—The Jews do not quote the words of Jesus with exactness. He had said, 'shall never behold death,'—for ever shall be spared the sight of death; they vary the metaphor a little, passing to a still more familiar phrase, 'taste death;' perhaps because it seemed more direct and clear, less susceptible of a figurative meaning.

Vers. 54, 55A. Jesus answered, If I glorify myself, my glory is nothing: it is my Father that glorifieth me, of whom ye say that he is your God, and have not got knowledge of him. First, Jesus answers the direct question, 'Whom makest Thou Thyself?' and the general charge of self-exaltation which those words contain. The specific reference to Abraham He speaks of afterwards (ver. 56). The tenor of His reply resembles that of ver. 50; but, as elsewhere, the second statement has the greater force and clearness. The reality of the glory of Jesus consists in this, that it comes from His Father, whom they called their God, but of whom they had gained no knowledge.

Ver. 55B. But I know him; and if I should say, I know him not, I shall be like unto you, a liar: but I know him, and keep his word. Jesus can say, 'I know God,' by direct, intuitive, perfect knowledge. The word which He uses in reference to Himself ('I know') is different from that used in the preceding clause, this latter ('ye have got knowledge') referring to the result of experience, to knowledge gained by many acts of perception. Were Jesus to deny His immediate knowledge, He would be as false as they have been in professing to know God. The last words are interesting as bringing out once more the truth which we have seen presented in earlier verses: His own work in the execution of the Father's will is the model of the work which He requires from man. His people 'keep His word' (ver. 51): He Himself keeps the Father's word. So, in chap. xx. 21, He says to the apostles, 'As my Father hath sent me, I also send you.'

Ver. 56. Your father Abraham exulted that he should see my day; and he saw it and rejoiced. This translation, though more exact than that of the Authorised Version, does not fully bring out the meaning of the original. All English renderings of the words (unless they are paraphrases) must be more or less ambiguous. 'Rejoiced to see' conveys the meaning of 'rejoiced because (or when) he saw;' 'exulted that he should see' means strictly, 'exulted in the knowledge that he should see.' Nor is the difficulty removed if we take the ordinary rendering of the Greek construc-

tion, 'that he might;' for *exulted that he might see* is ambiguous still, though not in the same way. Perhaps the Greek words (which are very peculiar) are best represented by the paraphrase, 'Your father Abraham exulted in desire that he might see my day; and he saw (it) and rejoiced.' The interpretation, which is as difficult as the translation, turns mainly on the meaning of the words 'my day.' The nearest approach to this expression in the New Testament is found in Luke xvii. 22, 'one of the days of the Son of man,' where the meaning must be 'one of the days connected with the manifestation of the Son of man upon the earth.' Here the form is more definite, 'my day,' and it seems exceedingly difficult to give any other meaning than either the whole period of the life of Jesus on earth, or, more precisely, the epoch of the Incarnation. In this case the past tense 'he saw it' is conclusive for the latter, if actual sight is intended. The patriarch received the promise in which was contained the coming of the day of Christ. By faith he saw this day in the far distance, but—more than this—exulting in the prospect he longed to see the day itself: in joyful hope he waited for this. In the fulness of time the day dawned; the heavenly host sang praises to God for its advent; and (none who remember the appearance of Moses and Elias on the Mount of Transfiguration can feel any difficulty in the words of this verse) Abraham too saw it and rejoiced. By those who do not accept this explanation it is urged—(1) That Jesus would probably not thus refer the Jews to that which no Scripture records. But the truth spoken of is so general and so simple—Abraham's knowledge of the fulfilment of God's promises to him—that no Jew who believed in Jesus could refuse it credence. (2) That 'sees' and 'rejoices' would be more natural than 'saw' and 'rejoiced.' Not so, if the Incarnation is the event before the mind. (3) That this view is not in harmony with the reply of the Jews in the next verse. That point will be considered in the note on the verse. The only other possible interpretation is that which refers the words to two distinct periods in the earthly life of Abraham; one at which, after receiving the promises, he exulted in eager desire for a clearer sight, and another at which this clearer sight was gained. But it is very hard to think of two epochs in the patriarch's life at which these conditions were satisfied; and it is still more difficult to believe that 'my day' is the expression that Jesus would have used had this been the sense designed. Verily, if Abraham thus exulted in the thought of the coming of his son and his Lord, the Jews who are despising and rejecting Him do not Abraham's works, are **no** true seed of Abraham.

Ver. 57. The Jews therefore said unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? The Jews understand 'my day' to mean the time of His life; and His knowing that Abraham has witnessed this with joy must certainly imply that He has seen Abraham. How can this be, since He is not yet fifty years of age? It seems most probable that 'fifty' is chosen as a round number, as a number certainly beyond that of our Lord's years of life. Some have supposed from this verse that sorrow had given to Him the appearance of premature age.

Ver. 58. Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was born, I am. The third occurrence of the solemn formula

'Verily, verily,' marks the highest point reached by the words of Jesus at this time. The substance of the words is in completest harmony with the form. In the clearest possible manner Jesus declares, not only His existence before Abraham, but also the essential distinction between His being and that of any man. Man is born, man passes through successive periods of time: of Himself, in regard alike to past, present, and future, Jesus says 'I am.' He claims for Himself that absolute, unchanging existence which is the attribute of God alone. If any argument be needed to enforce that which the words themselves supply, it is furnished in the conduct of the Jews (ver. 59), who clearly understood them to be a distinct (and in their mind a blasphemous) claim of that which belonged to God alone. The thought is distinctly present in the Old Testament: see Ps. cii. 27, but especially Ps. xc. 2. The English reader naturally recurs in thought to Ex. iii. 14, but there

are two considerations which make it very difficult to assert positively that that verse is necessarily referred to here: (1) The doubt which rests on the translation. 'I will be' is at least as natural as a translation as 'I am.' (2) The Greek translation of the Divine Name there used differs materially from the words of this verse, and agrees rather with the original of Rev. i. 4. If our version does really express the meaning of Ex. iii. 14, it is impossible not to associate that verse with the one before us.

Ver. 59. They took up stones therefore that they might cast them upon him; but Jesus hid himself, and went forth from the temple-courts. The Jews were enraged at what they considered blasphemy, and in their rage they would have stoned Him (compare chap. x. 31). But His hour was not yet come. He hid Himself (whether miraculously or not we cannot tell) and went forth from the temple.

## CHAPTER IX. 1-12.

### *The Opening of the Eyes of the Blind Man.*

- 1 **A**ND as Jesus<sup>1</sup> passed by, he saw a man which was blind  
 2 from his birth. And his disciples asked him, saying,  
 "Master,<sup>2</sup> who<sup>3</sup> did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was<sup>3</sup>  
 3 born blind? Jesus answered, Neither hath<sup>4</sup> this man sinned,<sup>3</sup>  
 nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made  
 4 manifest in him. "I<sup>5</sup> must work the works of him that sent  
 me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man<sup>7</sup> can work.  
 5 As long as<sup>6</sup> I am in the world, "I am the light of<sup>7</sup> the world.  
 6 When he had thus spoken, he<sup>8</sup> spat on the ground, and made  
 clay of the spittle, and he anointed the eyes of the blind man  
 7 with the clay,<sup>9</sup> And said unto him, Go, wash in<sup>4</sup> the pool of  
 Siloam, (which is by interpretation, Sent.) He went his way<sup>10</sup>  
 8 therefore, and washed, and came seeing. The neighbours  
 therefore, and they which before had seen him<sup>11</sup> that he was  
 9 blind,<sup>12</sup> said, Is not this he that sat and begged? Some<sup>13</sup> said,  
 This<sup>14</sup> is he: others said, He<sup>15</sup> is like him: but<sup>16</sup> he said, I am  
 10 he. Therefore said they<sup>17</sup> unto him, How<sup>18</sup> were thine eyes  
 11 opened? He answered and said,<sup>19</sup> A<sup>20</sup> man<sup>2</sup> that is called  
 Jesus made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me,  
 Go to the pool of<sup>21</sup> Siloam, and wash: and<sup>22</sup> I went<sup>23</sup> and

<sup>3</sup> Chap. i. 38.  
<sup>4</sup> Ver. 34.

<sup>7</sup> Chap. xi. 4.  
<sup>8</sup> Chap. xi. 9,  
xii. 35.

<sup>9</sup> Chap. i. 4, 9,  
viii. 12, xii.  
46. See  
chap. iii. 19.  
<sup>10</sup> Chap. i. 29.  
<sup>11</sup> Mark vii. 33,  
viii. 23.  
<sup>12</sup> Neh. iii. 25;  
Isa. viii. 6.

<sup>19</sup> Vers. 6 & 9

- <sup>1</sup> he      <sup>2</sup> Rabbi      <sup>3</sup> should be      <sup>4</sup> did      <sup>5</sup> sin      <sup>6</sup> We  
<sup>7</sup> one      <sup>8</sup> Whosoever      <sup>9</sup> and with his clay anointed his eyes  
<sup>10</sup> went away      <sup>11</sup> and they which beheld him aforetime  
<sup>12</sup> was a beggar      <sup>13</sup> Others      <sup>14</sup> It      <sup>15</sup> others said, No, but he  
<sup>16</sup> omit but      <sup>17</sup> They said therefore      <sup>18</sup> How then  
<sup>19</sup> omit and said      <sup>20</sup> The      <sup>21</sup> omit the pool of  
<sup>22</sup> omit and      <sup>23</sup> I went away therefore

12 washed, and I received sight. Then said they<sup>24</sup> unto him,  
Where is he? He said,<sup>25</sup> I know not.

<sup>24</sup> And they said

<sup>25</sup> saith

CONTENTS.—The conflict of Jesus with the Jews begins to draw to a close. At the last verse of the preceding chapter Jesus had hidden Himself and gone out of the temple, leaving it in possession of those who had wilfully blinded themselves against His claims, who must now therefore be left to the darkness which they have chosen, and from whom such as will behold in Him the Light of Life must be withdrawn. This great truth is illustrated by the story of the man born blind, upon whom a miracle of healing is performed. The enmity of the Jews is roused; but in the process raised by them they are defeated, and the blind man, cast out by his former co-religionists, becomes a trophy of the power and grace of the persecuted Redeemer.

Ver. 1. And as he passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth. There is nothing to connect this chapter with the last, in regard to time or place. The closing words of the eighth chapter as they stand in the ordinary text, 'and so passed by,' would indeed suggest a very intimate connection with the verse before us; but those words are certainly not genuine. The light, too, which the present chapter casts on the accessories of the event related in it is very scanty. The day to which the narrative refers was a sabbath (ver. 14): the blind man (who was of Jewish birth; see ver. 34) had been wont to sit and beg from passers-by (ver. 8). We naturally think, perhaps, of the lame man who was brought from day to day and laid by the gates of the temple (Acts iii.), and are ready to assume that the same neighbourhood must be thought of here; but there is nothing in the text either for or against such an opinion. The two points which John brings before us are simply that the case of the afflicted man was (in itself) hopeless, and that the Saviour saw him as He passed by. The obvious purpose of this latter statement is to direct our thoughts to the spontaneous compassion of Jesus. The man said nothing, did nothing, to awaken His pity, nor did the question of the disciples in ver. 2 first call His attention to the case. He feels and acts Himself; and the interest of the disciples does not precede but follow that shown by their Master.

Ver. 2. And his disciples asked him, saying, Rabbi, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he should be born blind? It is not said that the disciples were moved to pity, but it is not right to assume the contrary. That Jesus had looked on the blind man would be enough to raise their expectation of a cure; but expressly to relate this might well seem needless. Whatever feeling, however, the sight may have stirred in them, it recalled a problem which was very familiar to the thought of the Jews, and which repeatedly meets us in the Scriptures of the Old Testament,—the connection between personal sin and bodily suffering or defect. Here was a signal example of physical infirmity: what was its cause? The question seems to show a conviction on their part that the cause was *sin*; but the conviction may have been less firm than the words themselves would imply. In assuming that the blindness was the consequence of sin they were following the

current theology of their time: but how was this dogma to be applied in the case before them? Who had sinned? Was it the man himself? Or had his parents committed some offence which was now visited upon their child? (comp. Ex. xx. 5, xxxiv. 7; Num. xiv. 18, 33; Jer. xxxii. 18). The passages to which we have referred throw light on the latter alternative; but what is the meaning of the former, as the man was *born* blind? It is not necessary to discuss the various explanations that have been given, some of which seem wholly improbable. Three only need be mentioned, as having apparently some sanction from what we know of Jewish thought in the apostolic age. (1) We are told by Josephus that the Pharisees held the belief that, whereas the souls of the wicked are eternally punished, the souls of the righteous pass into other bodies. Hence it has been maintained that the Pharisees held the doctrine of the transmigration of souls; and the passage before us is frequently explained accordingly. If, however, we compare all the passages in which Josephus refers to tenets of the Pharisees respecting the state of man after death, it will at least appear very uncertain that such a meaning should be attached to his words as quoted above. It is very possible that the historian is there referring entirely to a state of being beyond the limits of this world's history; or that, in the attempt to present the belief of his countrymen in a form familiar to the Roman conquerors, he has used language which conveys an erroneous impression. At all events we cannot assume that the transmigration of souls was a tenet widely embraced by the Jewish people of that age, without far stronger evidence than we now possess. (2) The philosophic doctrine of the pre-existence of souls was certainly held by many Jews at the time of which we are speaking. As early as the book of Wisdom we find a reference to this doctrine (see chap. viii. 19, 20), and passages of similar tendency may easily be quoted from Philo. Yet it seems improbable that an opinion which was essentially a speculation of philosophy, and was perhaps attractive to none but philosophic minds, should manifest itself in such a question as this, asked by plain men unacquainted with the refinements of Greek thought. (3) It seems certainly to have been an ancient Jewish opinion that sin could be committed by the unborn child; and that the narrative of Gen. xxv., appearing to teach that the odious character of a supplanter belonged to Jacob even before birth, gave the authority of Scripture to such a belief. On the whole this seems to afford the best explanation of the question of the disciples: Was the sin so severely punished committed by this man himself, in the earliest period of his existence, or have the iniquities of his parents been visited upon him? (On the word Rabbi, see chap. i. 38.)

Ver. 3. Jesus answered, Neither did this man sin, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him. It is obvious at once that Jesus does not deny the presence of sin in the man himself or in his parents: His words must be read in close connection with the

question to which they form a reply. The meaning of the whole verse (which is unusually elliptical) may be given thus: 'Neither did this man sin nor his parents that he should be born blind, but (he was born blind,—he is as he is) that the works of God may be manifested in him.' Not to suggest or unravel speculative questions, but to present a sphere for the manifestation of the works of God, hath this man borne this infirmity. The last clause of the verse does not simply mean that a miracle is to be wrought on him: 'in him'—alike in his physical (vers. 6, 7) and in his spiritual healing (vers. 36-38)—the love and grace of God are to be made manifest.

Ver. 4. We must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no one can work. The substitution of 'we' for 'I' (a change supported by the best evidence) lends peculiar force and beauty to the verse. Jesus associates His disciples with Himself: like Himself they have a calling which must not be disobeyed, to work the works of God; for them, as for Himself, the period of such action will not always last. He does not say 'Him that sent us,' for it is the Son who sends His disciples, even as the Father sends the Son (chap. xx. 21). 'Day' seems to be used here simply to denote the time during which the working assigned to Jesus and His people in this world can be performed: 'night,' the time when the working is impossible. In a proverbial saying of this kind the words must not be pressed too far. It is true that the Lord Jesus continues to work by His Spirit, and through His servants, though the 'day' of which He here speaks soon reached its close. But the work He intends is such work as is appointed for the 'day,' whether to Himself or to His people.—As joined with the verses which precede, this saying could not but come to the disciples as a reminder that not idle speculation but work for God was the duty they must fulfil.

Ver. 5. Whosoever I am in the world, I am the light of the world. The work of Jesus in the world is to be the world's light. This thought, expressed in words in the last chapter (chap. viii. 12), and in this by deeds, binds together the different portions in this section of the Gospel. 'I am the light,' Jesus says, but even in this figure the 'we' of the last verse may be remembered, for his disciples also 'are the light of the world' (Matt. v. 14). The first word of the verse is worthy of all attention, pointing as it does to all periods at which 'the light' hath shined amid the darkness of this world (chap. i. 5).

Vers. 6, 7. When he had thus spoken, he spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and with his clay anointed his eyes. And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam (which is, by interpretation, Sent). He went away there-

fore, and washed, and came seeing. In the case of no miracle which Jesus wrought is His procedure as remarkable as it is here. We may at once dismiss the thought that such a mode of cure was in itself necessary: whatever may have been the design of Jesus in making use of it, He needed no instrument or means of cure. There is probably truth in the suggestion that the means of healing chosen by our Lord had in most cases some reference to the mental condition of the sufferer, and that here His procedure was well fitted to awaken and make trial of faith; but it is impossible to rest satisfied with any such explanation. The language of the Evangelist compels us to look upon the



Pool of Siloam.

whole action as symbolical. The introductory words link these verses to those in which Jesus speaks of the manifestation of Himself to the world (vers. 4, 5): the interpretation of the name Siloam leads us back to the thought of Him who everywhere in this Gospel is solemnly brought before us as 'the Sent of God.' These indications teach us to see in the whole action of Jesus a special symbolical reference to Himself and His work. The means chosen are very remarkable. It is said indeed, and with truth, that the anointing of the eyes with spittle was a common practice,



adopted for medicinal effect : but no such usage has any connection with this passage, for the eyes were anointed, not with the spittle but with the *clay*. In two other records of works of healing (both given by Mark, whose Gospel presents many points of contact with that of John) Jesus makes use of spittle (Mark vii. 33, viii. 23), and we can hardly help supposing that this means was chosen as a symbol of that which was in closest connection with Himself : thus in Eccles. xxviii. 12 the breath of the mouth and its moisture are brought together as alike in source, though differing in effects. Having made the clay, He anointed 'with His clay' the blind man's eyes. The original words do not seem easily to bear any other meaning, and we fail to do justice to them unless we suppose that their object is to lay emphasis on the clay *made by Jesus*, and thus again to bring Himself, not merely the clay that He has made, but 'His clay,' into prominence,—the clay in which something of His personality is expressed. (Some of the Fathers imagine that there is a reference to Gen. ii. 7, but this seems too remote.) Again the word 'anointed' no doubt contains an allusion to Jesus the *Christ*, the anointed One. The name of the pool Siloam or (according to the Hebrew form) Siloah is the last point to be noted, and here the meaning is supplied by John himself. As originally given to the pool, it is supposed to mean 'sent forth,' *i.e.* issuing forth, said of the waters that issue from the springs that feed the pool, or of the waters which issue from the pool to the fields around. From this pool water had been drawn to pour upon the altar during the feast just past (see chap. vii. 38) : it was associated with the wells of salvation of which Isaiah speaks (chap. xii. 3), and the pouring out of its water symbolized the effusion of spiritual blessing in the days of the Messiah. With most natural interest, therefore, the Evangelist observes that its very name corresponds to the Messiah ; and by pointing out this fact indicates to us what was the object of Jesus in sending the man to these waters. In this even more distinctly than in the other particulars that we have noted, Jesus, whilst sending the man away from Him, is keeping Himself before him in everything connected with his cure. Thus throughout the whole narrative all attention is concentrated on Jesus Himself, who is 'the Light of the world ;' who was 'sent of God' to 'open blind eyes :' every particular is fraught with

instruction to the disciples, who are to continue His work after His departure, and who must be taught that they can bring sight to the blind only by directing them to Jesus their Lord. As has been said above, we must not reject the thought that in our Lord's procedure lay a discipline for the man himself. The use of means may naturally have been a help to his faith ; but this faith could not fail to be put to the test when the means proved to be such as might have *taken away* vision from one who was not blind (comp. ver. 39). Neither of this, however, nor of the discipline contained in the delay of the cure does the Evangelist speak ; for he would fix our attention on Jesus alone. That the obedience of faith was rewarded we are told in the fewest words possible : the man 'went and washed and came seeing.' The pool of Siloam, which still retains its name (Silwān), is situated near the opening of the valley of Tyropœon. All works on the topography of Jerusalem give a description of the site.

Ver. 8. *The neighbours therefore, and they which beheld him aforetime, that he was a beggar, said, Is not this he that sat and begged ?* The fact that he was a beggar has not been mentioned before. Stress is laid on it here rather than on his blindness, because it was from his frequenting the spot for the purpose of begging that he had become well known.

Ver. 9. *Others said, It is he : others said, No, but he is like him. He said, I am he.* The object of this verse and the last is to show how notorious the cure became, and how firmly the fact had been established.

Ver. 10. *They said therefore unto him, How then were thine eyes opened ?* It does not appear that this was more than a simple inquiry. As yet no element of malice against Jesus is introduced.

Ver. 11. *He answered, The man that is called Jesus made clay, and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to Siloam, and wash. I went away therefore and washed, and I received sight.* This man, then, knew his Deliverer, though not His true nature (ver. 36). The wording of the phrase would seem to imply that he had in his thoughts the meaning of the name 'Jesus,' so wonderfully illustrated in his own case.

Ver. 12. *And they said unto him, Where is he ? He saith, I know not.* Comp. chap. v. 12, 13.

## CHAPTER IX. 13-X. 21.

### *Jesus the Light separating between the light and the darkness.*

13 **T**HEY brought<sup>1</sup> to the Pharisees him that aforetime<sup>2</sup> was  
14 blind. "And<sup>3</sup> it was the sabbath day<sup>4</sup> when Jesus made<sup>5</sup> Chap. v. 9  
15 the clay, and opened his eyes. Then again<sup>6</sup> the Pharisees also  
asked him how he had received his sight. He<sup>6</sup> said unto them, He  
16 put clay upon mine eyes, and I washed, and do see. Therefore  
said some of the Pharisees, This man is not of<sup>7</sup> God, because<sup>8</sup> he

<sup>1</sup> bring

<sup>2</sup> once

<sup>3</sup> Now

<sup>4</sup> on the day

<sup>5</sup> Again therefore

<sup>6</sup> and he

<sup>7</sup> from

<sup>8</sup> Luke xiii  
14 : chap. v.  
16, vii. 23

keepeth not the sabbath day. Others said, 'How can a man that  
is a sinner do such miracles?'<sup>8</sup> And<sup>9</sup> there was a division among  
17 them. They say<sup>9</sup> unto the blind man again, What sayest thou  
of him, that<sup>10</sup> he hath<sup>11</sup> opened thine eyes? He<sup>12</sup> said, 'He is  
18 a prophet. But the Jews<sup>13</sup> did not believe concerning him, that  
he had been blind, and received his sight, until they called the  
19 parents of him that had received his sight. And they asked<sup>14</sup>  
them, saying, Is this your son, who ye say was born blind?  
20 how then doth he now see? His parents<sup>15</sup> answered them<sup>16</sup>  
and said, We know that this is our son, and that he was born  
21 blind: But by what means<sup>17</sup> he now seeth, we know not; or  
who hath<sup>11</sup> opened his eyes, we know not: he is of age; ask  
22 him:<sup>18</sup> he shall speak for himself. These words spake<sup>19</sup> his  
parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had  
23 agreed already,<sup>20</sup> that if any man did<sup>21</sup> confess that he was  
Christ, he<sup>22</sup> should be put out of<sup>23</sup> the synagogue. Therefore  
24 said his parents, He is of age; ask him.<sup>24</sup> Then again called  
they<sup>25</sup> the man that was blind, and said unto him,<sup>26</sup> Give God  
25 the praise:<sup>27</sup> we know that this man is a sinner. He answered  
and said,<sup>28</sup> Whether he be a sinner or no,<sup>29</sup> I know not: one  
26 thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see. Then said  
they<sup>30</sup> to him again,<sup>31</sup> What did he to thee? how opened he  
27 thine eyes? He answered them, I have told you already, and  
ye did not hear: wherefore would ye hear it again? will<sup>32</sup> ye  
28 also be<sup>33</sup> his disciples? Then<sup>34</sup> they reviled him, and said,  
29 Thou art his disciple; but<sup>35</sup> we are Moses' disciples. We know  
that God spake<sup>36</sup> unto Moses: *as for this fellow,*<sup>37</sup> we<sup>38</sup> know  
30 not from whence he is. The man answered and said unto  
them, 'Why, herein is a<sup>39</sup> marvellous thing, that ye know not  
31 from whence he is, and yet he hath<sup>11</sup> opened mine eyes. Now<sup>40</sup>  
we know that<sup>41</sup> God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a  
worshipper of God, and doeth<sup>42</sup> his will, <sup>43</sup>him he heareth.  
32 Since the world began was it not heard that any man<sup>44</sup> opened  
33 the eyes of one<sup>45</sup> that was born blind. 'If this man were not  
34 of<sup>46</sup> God, he could do nothing. They answered and said unto  
him, 'Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach  
us? And they<sup>47</sup> cast<sup>48</sup> him out.  
35 Jesus heard that they had<sup>49</sup> cast<sup>48</sup> him out; and when he had

<sup>8</sup> Ver. 33;  
chap. iii. 2,  
x. 21.  
<sup>9</sup> See chap.  
vii. 18.

<sup>10</sup> Chap. iv. 29.

<sup>11</sup> Luke xxiii. 5;  
Acts xxiii. 20.  
<sup>12</sup> Ver. 34;  
chap. xii. 42,  
xvi. 2.

<sup>13</sup> Josh. vii. 19;  
1 Sam. vi. 5.

<sup>14</sup> Chap. v. 45.  
<sup>15</sup> Chap. viii. 14.

<sup>16</sup> Chap. iii. 10.

<sup>17</sup> Job xxvii. 9;  
Ps. lxxvi. 18;  
Prov. i. 28,  
xv. 29, xxviii.  
9; Isa. i. 15;  
Zech. vii. 13.  
<sup>18</sup> Job xlii. 8;  
Ps. cxlv. 19;  
Isa. v. 14, 15.  
<sup>19</sup> Ver. 16.

<sup>20</sup> Ver. 2.  
<sup>21</sup> Ver. 22;  
chap. x. 4.

<sup>8</sup> signs    <sup>9</sup> say therefore    <sup>10</sup> because    <sup>11</sup> omit hath    <sup>12</sup> And he  
<sup>13</sup> The Jews therefore    <sup>14</sup> and asked    <sup>15</sup> add therefore    <sup>16</sup> omit them  
<sup>17</sup> But how    <sup>18</sup> ask himself; he is of age  
<sup>19</sup> These things said    <sup>20</sup> had already covenanted    <sup>21</sup> should  
<sup>22</sup> put away from    <sup>23</sup> himself  
<sup>24</sup> They called therefore a second time    <sup>25</sup> Give glory to God  
<sup>26</sup> He therefore answered    <sup>27</sup> omit or no    <sup>28</sup> They said therefore  
<sup>29</sup> omit again    <sup>30</sup> would    <sup>31</sup> become    <sup>32</sup> And  
<sup>33</sup> hath spoken    <sup>34</sup> but as for this man    <sup>35</sup> the  
<sup>36</sup> omit Now    <sup>37</sup> do    <sup>38</sup> one    <sup>39</sup> a man    <sup>40</sup> from    <sup>41</sup> put



found him, he said unto him,<sup>43</sup> Dost thou believe on <sup>43</sup> the Son <sup>r Chap. i. 51.</sup>  
 36 of God? <sup>44</sup> He answered and said, Who <sup>45</sup> is he, Lord, that I  
 37 might <sup>46</sup> believe on <sup>47</sup> him? And <sup>48</sup> Jesus said unto him, Thou  
 38 hast both seen him, and <sup>49</sup> it is he that talketh with thee.<sup>50</sup> And <sup>r Chap. iv. 26.</sup>  
 39 he said, Lord,<sup>51</sup> I believe.<sup>52</sup> And he worshipped him. And  
 Jesus said, <sup>53</sup> For judgment <sup>54</sup> I am come <sup>55</sup> into this world, <sup>56</sup> that <sup>r Chap. v. 28.</sup>  
 they which see not might <sup>57</sup> see; and that they which see might <sup>r Mark iv. 12.</sup>  
 40 be made blind.<sup>58</sup> And <sup>59</sup> some <sup>60</sup> of the Pharisees which were  
 with him heard these words,<sup>61</sup> and <sup>62</sup> said unto him, Are we blind <sup>r Rom. ii. 19.</sup>  
 41 also? Jesus said unto them, <sup>63</sup> If ye were blind, ye should have <sup>r Chap. xv. 22, 24.</sup>  
 no sin: <sup>64</sup> but now ye say, We see; therefore <sup>65</sup> your sin  
 remaineth.<sup>66</sup>

1 CHAP. X. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not  
 by the door into the sheepfold,<sup>67</sup> but climbeth up <sup>68</sup> some other  
 2 way,<sup>69</sup> the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth  
 3 in by the door is the <sup>70</sup> shepherd of the sheep. To him the  
 porter openeth; and the sheep <sup>71</sup> hear his voice: and he calleth <sup>r Vers. 16, 27.</sup>  
 4 his own sheep <sup>72</sup> by name, and leadeth them out. And <sup>73</sup> when  
 he <sup>74</sup> putteth forth <sup>75</sup> his own sheep, he goeth before them, and  
 5 the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And <sup>76</sup> a  
 stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they  
 6 know not the voice of strangers. This <sup>77</sup> parable spake <sup>78</sup> Jesus <sup>r Chap. xvi. 25, 29.</sup>  
 unto them: but they understood not what things they were  
 7 which he spake unto them. Then said Jesus <sup>79</sup> unto them  
 again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the  
 8 sheep. All that ever <sup>80</sup> came before me are <sup>81</sup> thieves and <sup>b Ver. 1</sup>  
 9 robbers: but <sup>82</sup> the sheep did not hear them. I am the door: <sup>c Ver. 5.</sup>  
<sup>83</sup> by me if any man enter in,<sup>84</sup> he shall be saved, and shall go <sup>d Ver. 8.</sup>  
 10 in <sup>85</sup> and out,<sup>86</sup> and find pasture. The thief cometh not, but for  
 to steal,<sup>87</sup> and to <sup>88</sup> kill, and to <sup>89</sup> destroy: I am come <sup>90</sup> that they  
 might <sup>91</sup> have life, and that they might have <sup>92</sup> it more abund-  
 11 antly.<sup>93</sup> <sup>94</sup> I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd <sup>r Isa. xl. 11,</sup>  
 12 <sup>95</sup> giveth <sup>96</sup> his life for the sheep. But <sup>97</sup> he that is an hireling,  
 and not the <sup>98</sup> shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth <sup>99</sup>  
 the wolf coming, and <sup>100</sup> leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the  
 13 wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep.<sup>101</sup> The hireling <sup>r Chap. xv. 13;</sup>  
 fleeth,<sup>102</sup> because he is an hireling, and <sup>103</sup> careth not for the sheep. <sup>r John iii. 16,</sup>  
<sup>104</sup> <sup>r Zech. xi. 16, 17.</sup>

<sup>43</sup> omit unto him	<sup>45</sup> in	<sup>44</sup> man	<sup>46</sup> And who	<sup>46</sup> may
<sup>47</sup> omit And	<sup>48</sup> and he that speaketh		<sup>48</sup> with thee is he.	
<sup>49</sup> omit Lord	<sup>50</sup> I believe,	<sup>50</sup> Lord	<sup>51</sup> a judgment	<sup>53</sup> came I
<sup>55</sup> may become blind	<sup>54</sup> omit And		<sup>55</sup> Those	<sup>56</sup> things
<sup>57</sup> ye would not have sin		<sup>58</sup> omit therefore		<sup>59</sup> abideth
<sup>60</sup> fold of the sheep	<sup>61</sup> add from		<sup>62</sup> quarter	<sup>63</sup> a
<sup>64</sup> omit And	<sup>65</sup> hath put out all		<sup>66</sup> But	<sup>67</sup> said
<sup>68</sup> Jesus therefore said	<sup>69</sup> omit ever	<sup>70</sup> if any one have entered in		
<sup>71</sup> enter in	<sup>72</sup> and shall go out	<sup>73</sup> but that he may steal		
<sup>74</sup> omit to	<sup>75</sup> I came	<sup>76</sup> may have abundance		
<sup>78</sup> layeth down	<sup>79</sup> omit But	<sup>80</sup> a		
<sup>83</sup> beholdeth	<sup>85</sup> omit the sheep	<sup>88</sup> omit The hireling fleeth		

- 14 I am the good shepherd, <sup>84</sup> and know my <sup>84</sup> sheep,<sup>85</sup> and am <sup>84</sup> Ver. 27; a  
 15 known of mine.<sup>86</sup> <sup>87</sup> As<sup>87</sup> the Father knoweth me, even so know <sup>87</sup> Tim. ii. 19.  
 16 I the Father:<sup>88</sup> and I <sup>88</sup> lay down my life for the sheep. And <sup>88</sup> Matt. xi. 27.  
<sup>89</sup> other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I <sup>89</sup> Isa. lvi. 8;  
 must bring,<sup>90</sup> and they shall <sup>90</sup> hear my voice; <sup>90</sup> and there shall <sup>90</sup> chap. xi. 52.  
 17 be <sup>90</sup> one fold, <sup>90</sup> and one shepherd.<sup>91</sup> Therefore doth my <sup>91</sup> Father <sup>91</sup> Ver. 4.  
 love me, because <sup>91</sup> I <sup>91</sup> lay down my life, that I might <sup>91</sup> take it <sup>91</sup> Ezek. xxxvii.  
 18 again. No man taketh it from me, but I <sup>91</sup> lay it down of <sup>91</sup> 22, 24; Eph.  
 myself. I have power to lay it down, and I <sup>91</sup> have power to <sup>91</sup> ii. 14; 1 Pet.  
 take it again. <sup>92</sup> This commandment have <sup>92</sup> I received of my <sup>92</sup> Isa. liii. 7, 8,  
 Father. <sup>92</sup> See chap. <sup>92</sup> xii. 49.  
 19 <sup>93</sup> There was <sup>93</sup> a division therefore <sup>93</sup> again among the Jews for <sup>93</sup> Chap. vii. 12.  
 20 these sayings.<sup>97</sup> And many of them said, <sup>97</sup> He hath a devil,<sup>98</sup> <sup>97</sup> Chap. vii. 20.  
 21 and <sup>97</sup> is mad; why hear ye him? Others said, These are not <sup>97</sup> Mark iii. 22.  
 the words of him that hath a devil.<sup>99</sup> <sup>99</sup> Can a devil <sup>99</sup> open the <sup>99</sup> Chap. ix. 32.  
 eyes of the blind? <sup>99</sup> 33.

<sup>84</sup> and I know mine own	<sup>88</sup> omit sheep	<sup>88</sup> and mine own know me
<sup>87</sup> Even as	<sup>88</sup> and I know the Father	<sup>89</sup> I must lead
<sup>90</sup> and they shall become	<sup>91</sup> one flock, one shepherd	<sup>92</sup> the
<sup>93</sup> may	<sup>94</sup> omit have	<sup>95</sup> arose
<sup>96</sup> omit therefore	<sup>97</sup> because of these words	<sup>98</sup> demon
<sup>99</sup> the sayings of one that is possessed by a demon		

CONTENTS. The blind man, restored to sight, is brought before the Pharisees with the view of instituting proceedings against Jesus, who, by the healing on the Sabbath, had violated the sanctity of the day of rest. But the process proves a signal failure, issuing as it does in the rescuing of the man from the Pharisaic yoke, and in a solemn rebuke administered by Jesus to those who had placed him at their bar. In this rebuke He points out the blindness and faithlessness of the guides of Israel, and explains the nature of that work which He, the Good Shepherd, had to perform in saving His own from shepherds who had betrayed their trust, and in gathering them out of every fold into His one flock. The effect of the discourse is again to bring about a division among the hearers. The subordinate parts of the section are—(1) ix. 13-34; (2) ix. 35-41; (3) x. 1-18; (4) x. 19-21.

Ver. 13. They bring to the Pharisees him that once was blind. They bring him to the Pharisees as the especial guardians of the religious institutions of Israel. It is not at all likely that the man was brought before any formal court or assembly, but only before leading men amongst the Pharisees, who would at all times be ready to examine into such a charge as is implied in the next clause. The less formal and judicial their action was, the better does it illustrate the conflict of Jesus with the spirit of Judaism.

Ver. 14. Now it was the sabbath on the day when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes. It is very interesting to compare this verse with the similar words in chap. v. 9, 10. The only offence expressly mentioned there was the carrying of the bed, though there is no doubt that the charge against Jesus related not to this only but also to the performance of the cure (chap. vii. 22). Here the two counts of the accusation are distinctly

presented in their separation from each other,—(1) Jesus had made the clay; (2) He had opened the man's eyes. Another verse of the fifth chapter is likewise necessarily recalled to mind: speaking of the charge of labouring on the sabbath, Jesus said (ver. 17), 'My Father worketh until now: I also work.' So here in reference to the same day He says, 'We must work the works of Him that sent me.'

Ver. 15. Again therefore the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight; and he said unto them, He put clay upon mine eyes, and I washed, and do see. To his neighbours and acquaintances his answer had been fuller and more circumstantial: to the Pharisees, whom He knew to be the enemies of Jesus, he says as little as he may, and does not even mention his benefactor's name.

Ver. 16. Therefore said some of the Pharisees, This man is not from God, because he keepeth not the sabbath day. Others said, How can a man that is a sinner do such signs? And there was a division among them. The man's answer had been short and simple, but it had substantiated the two charges (see ver. 14) that had been brought. The testimony produced the effect which usually followed whenever Jesus manifested Himself,—some were attracted, some repelled. Godet remarks here, with peculiar force and propriety, 'The one party, taking as their starting-point the inviolability of the sabbatic law, deny to Jesus as a transgressor of this law any divine mission whatever; and from this logically follows the denial of the miracle. The others, setting out from the fact of the miracle, infer the holy character of Jesus, and implicitly deny the breaking of the sabbath. The choice of premiss depends in this case, as in all cases, upon the moral freedom; it is at this

point of departure that the friends of light and the friends of darkness separate; the rest is simply a matter of logic.

Ver. 17. They say therefore unto the blind man again, What sayest thou of him, because he opened thine eyes? And he said, He is a prophet. The fact is admitted, perhaps honestly, for it will be observed that, when we come to the next verse, we have a new set of questioners, and not simply persons who, having made a concession in the words before us, immediately withdraw it. The word 'thou' is emphatic: unable to decide the matter themselves, they seek to draw from the blind man some statement which may enable them more effectually to condemn Jesus. But his answer only deals an unexpected blow.

Ver. 18. The Jews therefore did not believe concerning him that he had been blind, and received his sight, until they called the parents of him that had received his sight. The change from 'the Pharisees' to 'the Jews' is very striking, and must have special significance. Nor is it difficult to find an explanation. The Pharisees (see the note on chap. vii. 32) were united in zeal for the law and in watchfulness over the rites and usages of Israel, but not in hostility to Jesus: we have just seen that the testimony regarding the miracle has divided them into two camps. It is of a hostile body only that the Evangelist is speaking in this verse. But there is probably another reason for the change of expression. 'The Jews' is not with John a designation of all the enemies of Jesus; it denotes the representatives of Jewish thought and action,—the leaders of the people, who, alas! were leaders in the persecution of our Lord. The use of the word here, then, leads us to the thought that the dispute had passed into a different stage. So serious had the case become that the rulers themselves engaged in it: more than this,—we have now done with inquiry in any true sense, and persecution has taken its place.

Ver. 19. and asked them saying, Is this your son, who ye say was born blind? how then doth he now see? In the hope that they may discover some flaw in the man's words, through which they may accuse him of complicity with Jesus, and, by thus destroying the idea of a miracle, may become free to deal with Jesus as a transgressor of the law, they question the parents of the man.

Ver. 20. His parents therefore answered and said, We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind. To two of the questions asked by the Jews the answer of the parents is perfectly clear and decided. In seeking for that which might invalidate the 'sign,' the enemies of Jesus have but obtained new testimony to its reality.

Ver. 21. But how he now seeth, we know not; or who opened his eyes, we know not: ask himself; he is of age: he shall speak for himself. The anxious care of the parents to keep clear of all testimony to Jesus is strikingly shown by the emphasis thrown on 'himself' as they refer the questioners to their son.

Vers. 22, 23. These things said his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had already covenanted that, if any man should confess that he was Christ, he should be put away from the synagogue. Therefore said his parents, He is of age; ask himself. There were (at all events at a later period) various degrees of excommunication; but in any form it was a punish-

ment of great severity, as the terror of the parents shows. The effect of the mildest grade was to render the culprit a heathen and no longer an Israelite during thirty days, depriving him of all intercourse with his family as well as of all privileges of worship. The growing alarm and hatred of the Jews are clearly shown by this compact. We are not to think of a decree of the Sanhedrin, or of any judicial act whatever, but of a private resolution taken by the Jews amongst themselves. The slight change of translation in the words 'put away from the synagogue' is intended to mark the fact that the expression used here is different from that which we find in vers. 34, 35.

Ver. 24. They called therefore a second time the man that was blind, and said unto him, Give glory to God: we know that this man is a sinner. In this second hearing the aim of the Jews is to overawe the man, and then force from him a confession that there had been some deception or mistake. This appears first in their words, 'Give glory to God' (see Josh. vii. 19),—a formula used when a criminal who was thought to be concealing the truth was urged to make a full confession. Remembering that the eye of God was upon him, let him give honour to God by speaking truth. Another significant point is the emphasis laid on '~~we~~ know'; the authorities to whom he has been wont to yield implicit respect and deference in all religious matters, possessed of deeper insight and wider knowledge than himself, (do not *think* merely, but) *know* that Jesus is a breaker of the law, and therefore cannot have wrought a miracle.

Ver. 25. He therefore answered, Whether he be a sinner, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see. His simplicity leaves them no real excuse for condemning: by his steadfast adherence to the one testimony which he alone was competent to render, he most effectually brings condemnation on his judges, who, had they been sincere, would first have sought certain knowledge of the fact (see note on ver. 16).

Ver. 26. They said therefore to him, What did he to thee? how opened he thine eyes? Every attempt to overthrow the *fact* has failed: possibly renewed inquiry as to the *mode* of cure may disclose something that may be used against Jesus. But the man has now perceived their design: they are not seeking the truth, and he will be the tool of no such judges as they are proving themselves to be.

Ver. 27. He answered them, I have told you already, and ye did not hear: wherefore would ye hear it again? would ye also become his disciples? The words 'ye did not hear' manifestly mean that they had not received and believed what they heard. The last clause is a little ambiguous in English. The meaning is not, Would ye in that case become His disciples? but, Is it your mind,—do ye also desire, to become His disciples? 'Ye also' may mean 'ye as well as others;' but it most naturally signifies 'as well as myself,' the blind beggar. The obstinate enmity of the Jews impels him to avow his own discipleship.

Ver. 28. And they reviled him, and said, Thou art his disciple, but we are Moses' disciples. Whether the man distinctly intended such reference to himself or not, it is thus that they understood his words; and this moves them contemptuously

to contrast 'that man' with their greatest prophet, Moses.

Ver. 29. We know that God hath spoken unto Moses; but as for this man we know not from whence he is. In holding by the law of Moses, then, they are safe and are assured that they are doing the will of God. If they do not know the origin of 'this man,' he can be worthy of no regard,—certainly he cannot be from God!

Vers. 30-33. The man answered, and said unto them, Why, herein is the marvellous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he opened mine eyes. We know that God heareth not sinners; but if any man be a worshipper of God, and do his will, him he heareth. Since the world began was it not heard that any one opened the eyes of a man that was born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing. Herein lies the very marvel,—that even ye, (1) knowing that no man ever receives power to do any miracle unless he be a worshipper of God and one that does His will; and (2) having proof that this man has done a miracle—yes, and such a miracle as has never before been wrought—will not see the conclusion that must follow, viz., that this man does the will of God,—that he is no sinner, but comes from God (see the note on ver. 16). The man has assumed the office of a teacher, and has so taught that they have no counter argument to offer; 'the wise are taken in their own craftiness' (Job v. 13).

Ver. 34. They answered and said unto him, Thou wast altogether born in sin, and dost thou teach us? And they put him out. The original is very graphic: In sins wast thou born, all of thee, and thou, dost thou teach us? There is probably a distinct reference to the belief which is expressed in ver. 2: the fact that in their passion they are thus acknowledging the reality of the miracle is no argument against such a reference: the man's whole condition, as evinced by his spirit and his words, bears yet stronger testimony than his blindness, and shows that he was *altogether* born in sins. The meaning of the last clause is not quite clear. It probably refers to ejection from the place in which the inquiry was held; but the next verse seems to prove that excommunication followed this. Cast out by the rulers from their place of meeting, he was cast out from all intercourse with them, and (so far as their influence extended) from the community over which they ruled. Such was the only reasoning which could be opposed to the triumphant argument of the man born blind!

Ver. 35. Jesus heard that they had put him out: and when he had found him, he said, Dost thou believe in the Son of man? The man has lost this world: in that loss he shall gain the next. This seems to be the connecting link between this verse and the preceding. Jesus knows well the firmness and the wisdom which the man had shown in the presence of the Jews. But He knows also that the man had by implication avowed himself His disciple, and for this had been thrust out from the presence of the rulers. For this very reason Jesus would draw the bond of discipleship closer, and receive amongst His own him whom the Jews rejected. He seeks for the man, and, having found him, asks, Dost thou believe in the Son of man? The word 'thou' is emphatic, and brings into relief the contrast with those in whose presence he has lately been, who declared Jesus a sinner, and who had agreed that whoever confessed

that Jesus was Christ should be excommunicated. The name 'Son of man' is equivalent to 'the Christ,' but gives prominence to the human nature of the Deliverer. This name therefore is altogether in harmony with the man's own words (vers. 31-33), in which he had spoken of Jesus as a worshipper of God and one who did God's will, one to whom God would hearken: to him Jesus, though 'from God' (ver. 33), was still 'a prophet' (ver. 17) and 'the man called Jesus' (ver. 11). Has he then true faith in the Messiah in whose cause he has been suffering? Does he give himself to Him with that faith which involves complete union with Himself and His cause, undeterred by the fact that He appears as a man amongst men, yea and as one despised and rejected by men? The ordinary reading 'Son of God' is in all probability incorrect. It is easy to see how it might accidentally find its way into the text, being suggested partly by the usual practice of John (who frequently joins 'believe in' either with the Son of God or with a name of similar import), and partly by the act of worship related in ver. 38.

Ver. 36. He answered and said, And who is he, Lord, that I may believe in him? These are not words of a doubter, but of one who seeks to be led to a complete faith. In Jesus he has fullest confidence, and he waits only to hear His declaration respecting the 'Son of man': as such Jesus has not yet manifested Himself to him.

Ver. 37. Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and he that speaketh with thee is he. This manifestation is now given; both in word ('he that speaketh' . . .) and in the half-veiled, yet clear, reference to the work that had been wrought on him ('thou hast *seen* Him') in the gift of physical (and we may certainly add spiritual) eyesight.

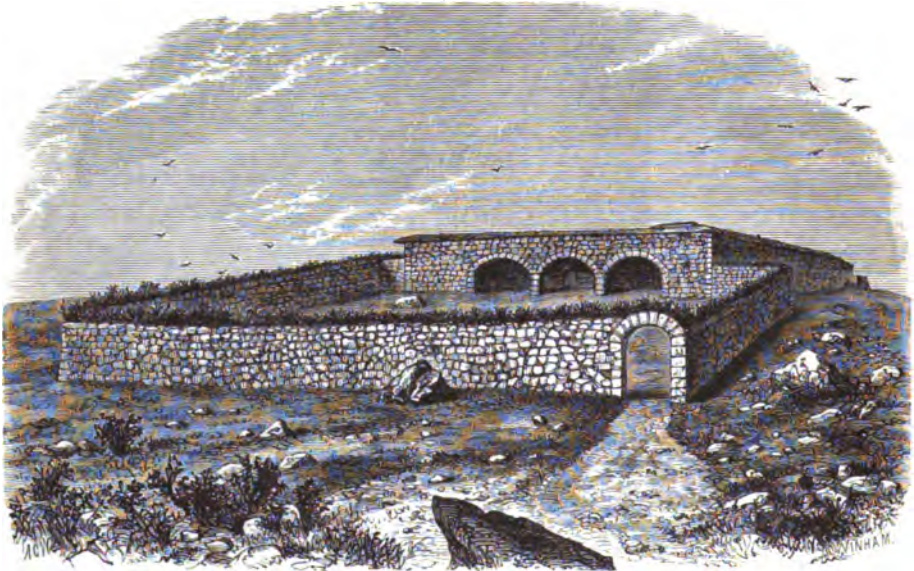
Ver. 38. And he said, I believe, Lord; and he worshipped him. The simple and immediate answer shows how little remained to be done to make his faith complete. Not with bodily senses only, but in his heart, he has seen Jesus; he has heard His word: he believes and worships the Son of man, the Messiah, his Lord. In this man, therefore, Jesus has manifested Himself as 'Light of the world' (ver. 5). But of this manifestation there are two opposite results; the Light will attract some out of the darkness: the Light will repel others into yet deeper darkness. The newly found disciple is an example of the one work, the hardened Jews of the other. Of these contrasted results Jesus Himself here speaks.

Ver. 39. And Jesus said, For a judgment came I into this world, that they which see not may see, and that they which see may become blind. The rendering 'a judgment' may serve to remind us of the fact that our Lord (here using a word which is not found elsewhere in the Gospel) does not speak of the act of judging, but of the result. He does not say that He came in order to judge, but that the necessary effect of His coming into this world, a world alienated from God, will be a judgment. Those that see not (the 'babes' of Matt. xi. 25) come to Him for sight: those that see (the 'wise and prudent'), who know the law and are satisfied with that knowledge, and who having all the guidance which should have led them to Christ do not come, 'become blind,'—lose all light through losing Him. Knowledge which has priceless value for pointing the way to Christ becomes accursed if put in His place as an object

of trust. It is possible that, as the word 'judge' seems elsewhere in this Gospel always to have the force of a condemning judgment, this sense should be preserved here also: in the one case the judgment is passed on acknowledged blindness, for they themselves who come to the light pass a condemnation on the blindness of their past state; in the other, judgment is passed upon supposed (or rather upon misused) sight. Thus both classes have a part in the 'judgment': the one by appropriating as just the judgment of Jesus on their blindness apart from Him; the other by deliberately shutting their eyes to the true light. The result of this wilful action is utter blindness,—not merely a disuse of sight, but a destruction of the power of sight.

Ver. 40. **Those of the Pharisees which were with him heard these things.** The whole cast of the language here used shows that those who speak are not representatives of the Pharisees as a body, or of the Pharisaic spirit in its worst cha-

racteristics. But lately there has been a division of feeling among the Pharisees in regard to Jesus (ver. 16). Some who were then impressed by His signs may have already become disciples; others may have remained in a state of uncertainty, impressed but not convinced,—not brought to the point of 'leaving all' their possessions of 'wisdom and prudence' and following Him. It may be that those spoken of here were of such a description. No one, probably, who duly apprehends the difference in the usage of John between 'the Pharisees' and 'the Jews,' will think that necessarily these words were uttered in derision, or that these men were 'with Him' as enemies and spies.—**And said unto him, Are we blind also?** There had been an apparent difficulty in the words of Jesus. They spoke of two classes, distinguished in their character as not seeing and seeing,—in their future lot, as receiving sight and becoming blind. The future lot is the result of the coming of Jesus into this world. It is very clear that He means that those



A Sheepfold.

who see not (like the despised blind man who has just been 'put out') will come to Him and obtain sight from Him. But what of the Pharisees whom He invites to come? Does He class them also amongst those who 'see not'? Surely (they think) this cannot be His meaning? And yet, if not, Pharisees are excluded from all hope of blessing, for His words speak of but two classes.

Ver. 41. **Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye would not have sin: but now ye say, We see; your sin abideth.** If, Jesus says, ye were really blind, unable to open your eyes to, and indeed unconscious of, the existence of the light now shining round you, you would not have sin,—the sin of rejection of the light would not lie at your door. But it is not so. They are their own judges. They themselves say, We see; and yet they come not to Him. Their sin abideth; they are guilty of that sin, and so long as they refuse

to come to Him the sin must abide. So at the close of chap. iii. we read: 'he that disobeyeth the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.'

Chap. x. vers. 1, 2. **Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the fold of the sheep, but climbeth up from some other quarter, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door is a shepherd of the sheep.** The opening words are of themselves sufficient to show that this chapter must be very closely joined to that which precedes, for nowhere in this Gospel do we find a new discourse introduced by 'Verily, verily, I say unto you.' The points of connection will be seen as the chapter proceeds; but we may briefly say that the thought of the Jews, who with their authoritative dictum 'We know' (ix. 24, 29) sought to hinder men of 'the multitude' from coming to Christ,

underlies the whole parable, and forms the chief link binding the chapters together. In the last verses of chap. ix. the action of the unbelieving rulers is contemplated in its bearing upon themselves; here in its bearing upon those of whom the Jews were the recognised leaders. The figure used is taken from the very heart of the Old Testament Dispensation. Again and again do the prophets utter language of scathing indignation against unfaithful shepherds who 'feed themselves and not their flocks'; and more frequently still is the tender care of the good shepherd portrayed. The Messiah Himself is represented under this character in several prophetic passages: two chapters especially, Ezek. xxxiv. and Zech. xi. (in each of which the contrasted types of shepherd are represented and the Messiah brought definitely into view), must be kept before us as we follow the course of this parable. It is unnecessary to dwell at any length upon the familiar facts which form the basis of the similitude employed. The 'fold' of the sheep was a large open space enclosed by a paling or by walls of no great height: ingress or egress was given only by a door kept by a porter, who is not to be confounded with the shepherd or shepherds for the protection of whose flocks the fold was used. All other points the narrative itself will bring out. In the first few verses the language is altogether *general*. A comparison is drawn between all shepherds of the flock and false and treacherous intruders into the fold. The application which Jesus makes to *Himself* of two of the figures in these opening verses does not yet come before the mind. The sheep are safe in the fold: there the narrative commences. We do not read how or by whom or whence they were brought into that fold for protection amidst the dangers of the night. In the morning the shepherds will come to lead forth their flocks, and having an acknowledged right of entrance will go in at the door. Should any one bent on entering the fold not come to the door, but climb over the fence and thus get in 'some other way' (literally, from some other quarter,—and when the parable is interpreted the significance of such a phrase will be felt), his aim is evil,—he wishes to get possession of sheep or of a flock to which he has no right,—he is therefore a thief and a robber, a man determined either by craft or by violence to win spoil for himself. 'Entering by the door,' then, is the first mark by which a rightful shepherd is distinguished from a man of selfish and treacherous ends.

Ver. 3. To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. This verse gives other marks which indicate a true shepherd. The keeper of the gate recognises him and gives him entrance. The sheep in the enclosure show at once that they are familiar with his voice. The sheep of his own particular flock he knows by name, and he calls them one by one. He has come in for their benefit and not his own, to lead them forth to pasture. To none of these indications does he answer who is an intruder and no shepherd. What travellers tell us of the relation of an Eastern shepherd to his flock shows how true to nature was the language of these verses. It is by his voice that the shepherd is recognised: he calls and the sheep come round him. In every flock there are some to whom he has given particular names, and who are wont to keep near

him; every one of these knows his own name and comes to the shepherd when that name is called. In this last feature the language of the parable may go beyond common experience. Such a shepherd as our Lord describes knows and calls *every one* of his sheep by name. It is sometimes, indeed, maintained that no distinction ought to be made between 'the sheep' of the first clause and 'His own sheep' in the clause that follows. But this is surely a mistake, resulting from the premature application of these words to Him who is 'the Good Shepherd.' He no doubt knows by name every sheep of every flock: as yet, however, we have before us not *the* Shepherd but every one who is *a* shepherd of the sheep. There is some difficulty in determining who is meant by the 'porter' of this verse. Many explanations have been given, but there are only two that seem really to agree with the conditions of the context. The keeper of the door recognises any rightful shepherd, and especially the True Shepherd (ver. 11), but closes the way to self-seekers,—and this during all that time of waiting of which we have yet to speak. He cannot, therefore, be either Moses or John the Baptist; the thought of *Divine* care is necessary. We must thus think either of Christ Himself or of the Father or of the Holy Spirit. To refer the term, however, to the first of these would be to confuse the parable: it must belong to one of the two latter,—the Father, or the Holy Spirit who gave and watched over the promises, who called and qualified the prophets of Israel. Perhaps ver. 15, in which Jesus speaks of the Father's recognition of Himself, makes the first of these two the more probable. The tenor of chap. vi. also, in which there is repeated mention of the Father's work in relation to the work of Jesus, confirms this view; and a further confirmation may be found in the parable of chap. xv., in which Jesus represents Himself as the vine and His Father as the husbandman.

Ver. 4. When he hath put out all his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. The first words take up the thought contained in the words that immediately precede ('and leadeth them out'), but express it with greater force. The shepherd leads forth *all* his own sheep,—not one is left behind. But the change from *leading out* to *putting out* is remarkable. In the figure it may refer to the solicitude of the shepherd to remove every sheep under his care from the fold in which it is not well that any should longer remain: some may be slow in following his lead, but he sees that none shall be overlooked. The real significance of this word, however, is connected with the interpretation of the parable (see below): for we cannot doubt that our Lord designedly uses here that very word which was employed to denote expulsion from the synagogue, and which has already met us in two consecutive verses of the previous chapter (34, 35), when the treatment received from the Jews by the man born blind is described. In this verse again we find complete faithfulness of description. To this day the Eastern shepherd goes before his flock, leading, not driving the sheep, and keeping them near him through their recognition of his voice.

Ver. 5. But a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers. The 'stranger' is not one to whom the porter has opened (for the voice of



every one who is thus admitted is familiar to all the sheep); he must therefore have entered by some other way, and he is in the fold as 'a thief and a robber.' No mark of a true shepherd is found in him. He has not entered by the door, and he has not been recognised by the keeper of the door; the sheep do not know his voice; he cannot call them by their names; his object is not their good, but his own spoil and gain. Lead a flock forth he cannot; the sheep flee from him.

Ver. 6. This parable said Jesus unto them: but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them. The word here used is not that which occurs so frequently in the other gospels in the sense of *parable*. It is found but four times in the New Testament—in 2 Pet. ii. 22, and in three verses of this Gospel (here and chap. xvi. 25, 29). In 2 Pet. ii. 22 the word has its ordinary signification 'proverb:' in chap. xvi. 29 it is opposed to speaking in a way the *most direct*,—the *highest and best* for the attainment of the speaker's end (comp. on xvi. 25). The derivation of the word suggests that the primary meaning was a *saying beside or out of the common way* which had not the direct plain bearing of an ordinary saying, but either was intended to have many applications (as a *proverb*), or was in some degree circuitous in the method by which it effected its purpose,—enigmatical or difficult. In this latter sense John seems to use the word, which does not therefore differ essentially from the 'parable,' as that word is used by the other Evangelists (see Matt. xiii. 11-15). It seems certain that had any one of them related the comparison of this chapter he would have employed the more familiar name. The Septuagint uses the two words with little difference of sense. On the present occasion it cannot be said that the language of Jesus was in itself difficult to understand; His description was faithful in all its parts; but His words as said 'to them' the Pharisees could not comprehend.

Ver. 7. Jesus therefore said unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. The formula which introduced the parable (ver. 1) now brings in the interpretation. This interpretation is given in two parts,—or, as perhaps we ought rather to say, two distinct applications of the parable are given: the two most important points in the figure are taken in succession, and in each aspect the parable finds its fulfilment in the Lord Jesus. But as the formula which introduces this verse is not repeated in ver. 11, it is more correct to divide vers. 1-18 into two parts (1-6, 7-18—the latter being subdivided at ver. 11) than into three.

First, Jesus declares Himself to be 'the door of the sheep,'—that is, not the door by which the sheep enter into the fold, but the door through which they will leave the fold at the call of the Shepherd, and (though this is not particularly specified until ver. 9) through which a shepherd enters to his sheep. The whole description of vers. 1-5 must be interpreted in harmony with this word of Jesus. If He is the Door, what is the fold?—who are the sheep? To answer these questions we must look forward to a later verse (ver. 16): 'And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must lead, and they shall hear my voice, and they shall become one flock, one shepherd.' That Jesus here speaks of the heathen world few will doubt; and if so, it is very clear that in ver. 1 the

Jewish Church is intended by 'the fold of the sheep.' Not that all who are found within the pale of Judaism belong to 'the sheep' of which Jesus speaks. The sheep are those who hear a true shepherd's voice; and we may so far forestall ver. 11 as to say that none are included under this designation who refuse to hear the voice of Jesus Himself. 'The sheep' are therefore those who in other passages are described as 'of God' (see chap. viii. 47), and 'of the truth' (chap. xviii. 37), and the 'fold' is the Jewish Church in so far as that Church has sheltered these until the fulness of time has come. Then, and not till then, shall the sheep be led out of the fold into the free open pastures: then, too, the 'other sheep' will be brought, and there shall be, not two flocks but one, under one Shepherd. It will be seen that in no part of this parable are the sheep said to return to the fold; the shepherds only are spoken of as entering in, and that for the purpose of leading out their flocks. In saying, 'I am the door of the sheep,' therefore, Jesus says in effect—(1) that through Him alone has any true guardian and guide of the sheep entered into the fold; (2) that through Him alone will the sheep within the 'fold' be led out into the open pastures. The latter thought is easily understood; it presents the same promise of the gladness and freedom and life of Messianic times as was set forth by the symbols of the feast of Tabernacles in the seventh and eighth chapters. Then the figures were the pouring out of water and the lighting of the golden lamps: the figure now is very different, but (as we have seen) equally familiar in Old Testament prophecy. Not until Messiah shall come will the night of patient waiting cease, and the fold be seen to have been only a temporary shelter, not a lasting home. The application of the words before us to the shepherds is more difficult; for when we consider how this chapter is connected with the last, it is plain that Jesus adverts to the presence within the fold of some who are not true shepherds. They have climbed up from some other quarter, and are in the fold to gratify their own selfishness and greed, not to benefit the flock. How then can it be said of them that they did not enter through the Door,—i.e., through our Lord Himself? In answering this question it seems plain that we have here a saying akin to that of chap. viii. 56, or xii. 41, or to that of Heb. xi. 26, in which Moses is said to have esteemed 'the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt.' The leading characteristic of preceding ages had been that they were a time of preparation for the Christ, that during them the promise and hope of the Christ had stood in the place of His personal presence. The object of every ruler in the Jewish Church, and of every teacher of the Jewish people, should have been to point forward to the coming of the Messiah; and each should have used all his power and influence, not for himself, but to prepare for the event in which the Jewish Church was to culminate and (in an important sense) come to an end, giving place to the Church Universal. The rulers brought before us in the last chapter had done the reverse; in no true sense had they prepared for the Christ: and, when the Christ appeared, so far from receiving Him, they had combined together to put away from the Church in which they bore rule every one who acknowledged that Jesus was He. Hence, accordingly,

the strong language of ver. 1. These teachers had 'climbed up from another quarter,' instead of entering by the Door. They had been marked by a spirit of self-exaltation, of earthly Satanic pride; they had appeared as the enemies of God, had refused to submit themselves to His plans, had sought not His glory but their own; their aims had been thoroughly selfish, devilish; they were of their father the devil (viii. 44). Thus, also, we see that the term 'a thief and a robber,' applied to such teachers in ver. 1, is not too strong, for they had perverted the whole object of the theocracy; they had made that an end which was only designed to be a means, and had done this as men who had blinded themselves to the true light, and were using the flock of God as instruments for their own aggrandisement. They were in the fold, but they had not entered through the door.

Such then being the meaning of the 'Door,' the 'fold,' the 'sheep,' the true and false shepherds, the rest of the description is easily understood. The true sheep know the voice of every rightful shepherd (vers. 3, 4); in all past ages there has been this mutual recognition between teachers sent by God and those who have desired to be taught of God. But the full accomplishment of the work described in these verses awaits the coming of Him who is the true Shepherd, through whom the sheep are to be led forth from the fold. To Him alone apply the words in their *completeness*, but in measure they most truly belong to every shepherd whose mission comes through Him.

Ver. 8. *All that came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them.* In the similitude of the door, Jesus had declared that it was through Him alone that the flocks could come out of the Jewish fold into the pastures into which they had longed to enter; and this was a truth not depending only upon His proclamation of it, but lying in the very essence of the Old Testament dispensation. The prophecies had fixed the thoughts of all true Israelites on 'Him that cometh,' and had shown them that until His coming their hopes could not be fulfilled. But some had forgotten this, and had falsely claimed the place that belonged to Jesus, each deceiver pretending that he himself was the medium through which God's people were to be led to the satisfaction of their hopes. But those who trusted in God and waited patiently for Him were kept by Him from these deceivers: 'the sheep did not hear them.'

Such is the general sense of this verse; it is less easy to fill up the outline it presents. We may well wonder that any should have thought that the words 'all that came before me' might include the prophets of the former dispensation; for the context most clearly proves that Jesus is speaking of those who 'came before Him,' *pretending to be 'the door of the sheep.'* The word 'came,' indeed, can hardly be interpreted without the thought of that designation so peculiarly belonging to Jesus in the Fourth Gospel, 'He that cometh.' No one else has a right thus to say 'I come,' 'I have come,' 'I came.' The idea of taking the work of Jesus in hand lies in 'came.' When, accordingly, setting aside the thought of all true prophets, we ask who they are to whom this description applies, we naturally think, in the first instance, of false Messiahs, of whom many

appeared in Jewish history. It may be said that we have no record of a claim to Messiahship earlier than the time when these words were spoken. This answer contains too positive an assertion. There is reason for believing that Judas of Galilee (mentioned in Acts v. 37) was regarded by some as the Christ; and Gamaliel's words respecting Theudas (Acts v. 36) may very possibly cover a similar assumption. The Gospels reveal a state of Messianic hope out of which such deception might easily arise. That popular insurrections were continually occurring is a notorious fact; and if Josephus, our chief authority for the history of this period, fails to give us a careful account of the religious hopes that were fostered by the leaders of revolt, his character and aims as a historian are a sufficient explanation of his silence. But whether the thought of false Messiahs is admissible or not, the meaning of the words must extend much farther, and must embrace all who had sought to turn the people from waiting for the promise which God had given, or had substituted other principles of national life for the hope of the Messiah. Such had long been the practical effect of the rule and teaching of Pharisees and Sadducees. These men had sat in the seat of Moses to make void the law and to extinguish the promise by their vain traditions, and for their selfish ends; and they are certainly, perhaps mainly, thought of here.

Ver. 9. *I am the door: by me if any one have entered in, he shall be saved, and shall enter in, and shall go out and find pasture.* From the thought of the 'thieves and robbers,' Jesus turns to that of 'a shepherd of the sheep.' And as entering by the door has been mentioned (ver. 1) as the first mark of a true shepherd, He emphatically repeats His former saying, 'I am the door.' In ver. 7, however, as ver. 8 shows, it is of the release of the flock from the fold that we must chiefly think (and therefore the words 'of the sheep' were naturally added). The repetition here introduces the other application of the thought. Whoever has entered through this Door (Christ) shall be saved, and shall enter in (to the fold), and shall go out and find pasture (for the flock over which he is placed in charge). The repetition of 'enter,' it will be seen, involves no tautology: first the shepherd passes through the door, then goes into the heart of the enclosure to call to him his sheep. He goes in for the purpose of coming out to find pasture for the flock that follows him from the fold. The chief difficulty lies in the interpretation of the words 'he shall be saved.' The sudden introduction of this thought in the very midst of figurative language most consistently preserved (*the door, enter in, go out and find pasture*) at first appears strange. But the very place which the words hold supplies a key to their interpretation. We cannot content ourselves with saying that the whole parable is instinct with the thought of salvation in its general sense, and that what is present in every part may surely be expressed in one. It is true that in our Lord's parables we sometimes find a rapid transition from the sign to the thing signified; but such an intermixture of fact and figure as (on that supposition) is found here, we meet with nowhere else. Whatever difficulty may arise, the words must connect themselves with the imagery of the parable. The chapters of Ezekiel and Zechariah, referred to in



the note on ver. 1, show at once how this is possible. We have before seen (see chap. iii. 3, vii. 39, viii. 33, etc.) how suddenly our Lord sometimes removes His hearers into a familiar region of Old Testament history or prophecy. To the teachers of the law, who were the bearers of most of the discourses related by John, the letter of the Old Testament was well known; and, moreover, it is very probable that in the discourses as delivered other words may have been added, not necessary to the completeness of the thought, but helpful to the understanding of the hearers. One of the connecting links between this chapter and the last is the evil wrought by unworthy and false shepherds; in this word suddenly introduced in the portraiture of a true shepherd we have vividly brought before us all that the prophets had said of the fate of the unworthy. Those shepherds who had no pity on the flock, but said, 'Blessed be the Lord, for I am rich,' the soul of the prophet 'loathed,' and he gave them to destruction (Zech. xi. 5, 8, 17). From all such penalty of unfaithfulness shall the true shepherd be 'saved.' That He whose love to His flock assigns this punishment to the unworthy will reward the faithful, may not be expressed in the figure, but in the interpretation it holds the chief place: to such a shepherd of souls will Jesus give salvation.—It should perhaps be said that (probably in consequence of the difficulty which the words 'he shall be saved' seem to present) this verse is usually understood as relating to the *sheep* and not to the *shepherds*. It seems impossible, however, to compare the language here used with that of vers. 1, 2 without coming to the conclusion that all the three are identical in subject.

Ver. 10. *The thief cometh not but that he may steal, and kill, and destroy.* This verse forms a link of connection between ver. 9 and ver. 11, presenting first the contrast between a true shepherd and 'the thief,' and then preparing the way for the highest contrast of all, that between the thief and the Good Shepherd. The rightful Shepherd has entered (ver. 9) that He may lead out His flock to the pastures; the thief cometh only to steal and kill, feeding himself and not the flock, even seeking its destruction.—*I came that they may have life, and that they may have abundance.* To this point the figure contained in 'I am the door' has been more or less clearly preserved, for the shepherd has, and the thief has not, entered the fold by the door. The language now before us does not really depart from this conception (for in opposition to those who 'came before' Him professing to be 'the door of the sheep,' Jesus here says 'I came'), although it agrees still better with the thought of ver. 11. In fact the words 'I came' stand in double contrast,—with the words of ver. 8, and with the first words of this verse 'the thief cometh.' By whatever figure Jesus is represented, the object of His appearing is the same, that His sheep may live. The life and abundance are the reality of which the pasturage (ver. 9) has been the symbol. As in chap. vii. the blessings of Messiah's kingdom are represented by abundant streams of living water, so here the regions into which Jesus is leading His flock are regions of life and of abundance. To His people He gives eternal life; there shall be no want to them for maintaining their life in all its freedom and joy; their 'cup runneth over.'

Ver. 11. *I am the good shepherd: the good*

*shepherd layeth down his life for the sheep.*

The aspect of the preamble here changes: in the following verses, until the 16th, there is no mention of the fold or of the door, but of the shepherd only and his relation to the flock. The word rendered 'good' occurs but seldom in this Gospel: it differs from the word ordinarily so translated (which however John uses still less frequently) in that it is never used to express the idea of kindness, but always signifies what is (outwardly or inwardly) beautiful, noble, excellent of its kind. Both words may be used to denote moral excellence, and with but slight difference of meaning. Here then the epithet has no reference to kindness but to excellence as a Shepherd. Is there a shepherd whose work is not only faithful but all fair, without spot or defect, such a Shepherd of the flock is the Lord Jesus. The highest point which the Shepherd's faithfulness can reach is His laying down His life for the sheep: when the wolf assaults the flock, the Good Shepherd repels him, although He die in the attempt. Strictly taken these words are general, and may be said of every noble shepherd; but, connected with the first clause, they in effect declare what is done by Jesus Himself. Our Lord's hearers at the time would understand no more than this, that at the peril of His life He would defend His flock; but it is impossible to read chap. xi. 51 without seeing in the words a reference to the truth declared in chap. iii. 14, 15, xii. 32,—the atoning death of the Redeemer which brings life to the world.

Vers. 12, 13. *He that is an hireling and not a shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, beholdeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep and fleeth (and the wolf catcheth them and scattereth), because he is an hireling and careth not for the sheep.* A true shepherd will purchase the life of his sheep by the sacrifice of his own life. The man who has taken the work of a shepherd for hire, who is only a hireling and careth not for the sheep, abandons them as soon as danger approaches, and gains his own life at the cost of the life of his sheep. Since the sheep are not to him as 'his own' the very name of shepherd is denied him. It may seem that the climax which usually shows itself in the narratives and discourses of this Gospel is here wanting, 'thief' and 'robber' being far stronger terms of reprobation than 'hireling.' But it is not really so: the thief at all events has betrayed no trust, and is less guilty than the hireling who in the hour of need forsakes the duty he had pledged himself to fulfil. Whom then does the hireling represent? If 'the thief' who comes under the guise of shepherd stands for all who force themselves into the place of rulers and guides, for the sake of private gain, 'the hireling' seems to represent those who held such place by lawful right, but when faithfulness was needed most deserted duty through fear. Godet points to chap. xii. 42 as exemplifying the description here given. The lawful rulers dare not avow their own convictions and thus guard the people who trust in them; the Pharisaic spirit is too strong for them; they save themselves by silence and give up those for whom they should care to the persecution of the enemy. Some of these will yield to the foe and deny that Jesus is the Christ; many will be scattered. It is possible therefore that 'the wolf' may here represent this spirit of Judaism, but we should rather say that it is the enemy (Luke x. 19) of God and

man who is represented under the symbol of the natural foe of the sheep and of the Shepherd. Whatever agency may be used, the ultimate source of the murderous design is the spirit of evil, the Devil, he who was 'a murderer from the beginning.'

Vers. 14, 15. I am the good shepherd, and I know mine own, and mine own know me, even as the Father knoweth me, and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. As the figure of ver. 7 was repeated in ver. 9, that it might receive a new and blessed application, so here we have a repetition of the figure presented in the 11th verse. The repetition removes from view the unworthy: we are brought once more into the presence of Jesus and His own. First and last in these two verses stand the two clauses of the former verse, altered only in so far that what there was said of the Good Shepherd is here said of Jesus Himself ('I lay down'). Between these two clauses are placed two other sayings, the first suggested at once by the figure used, the second rising higher than any earlier words of the parable. Since Jesus is the good Shepherd, His sheep hear His voice and He calleth His own sheep by name (ver. 3): hence He says that He knows (recognises) His own sheep and His own know (recognise) Him. But once more (see chap. viii. 38) He places in parallelism His own relation to the Father and the relation of His own to Him. He looks on the sheep and sees at once that they are His: they see Him and hear His voice and know that He is their Shepherd. So the Father looks on Him and sees in Him the Good Shepherd whom He sent: He looks on the Father, and constantly recognises His presence as the Father with Him. There is wonderful beauty and elevation in the comparison; no saying of our Lord goes beyond this in unfolding the intimacy of communion between Himself and His people which it reveals and promises. They are His, as He is the Father's. It seems very probable that in these words there lies a reference to ver. 2, where we read that he who stands at the gate admits the true shepherd within the fold, recognising him, distinguishing him at once from those who falsely claim the name, just as the shepherd distinguishes his own sheep from those that are not of his flock.—These two verses are remarkable for simplicity of structure. As in the simplest examples of Hebrew poetry, thought is attached to thought, one member is placed in parallelism with another. Yet, as in the Hebrew poetry of which this reminds us, a *dependence* of thought upon thought may be inferred, though it is not expressed. Thus we have seen that, if Jesus is the Good Shepherd, it must be true that He recognises His own sheep. So also (and it is to point out this that we call attention to the structure of the verse) the Father's recognition of Him closely connects itself with His laying down His life, as the Shepherd for the sheep. In this the Father sees the highest proof of His devotion to the work He has accepted: in the spirit of constant readiness for this crowning act of love He recognises the Father's constant presence and love (ver. 17). And, as the words of the verse bear witness to the Father's care for man (not less truly and powerfully because this meaning does not lie on the surface of the words), it is easy to see once more with what fitness we here read 'the Father,' and not simply 'my Father' (see chap. viii. 27, 38).

Ver. 16. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must lead, and they shall hear my voice. Not in the Jewish Church only was there a work of preparation for His coming: the light had been shining in the darkness (chap. i. 5),—the light which enlighteneth every man (i. 9). Many in the Gentile world were waiting only to hear His voice: they will recognise their Shepherd, and He will know His own sheep. He regards them as His own even now ('other sheep I have'); they are not shunning the light and seeking darkness; He receives them now as His Father's gift to Him. It is not easy to answer a question which the words immediately suggest: Does our Lord speak of these 'other sheep' of the Gentile world as abiding in a *fold*? It might be so. We cannot see that there would be difficulty in regarding that dispensation of which we know so little, the dealings of the One Father with the heathen world (to which had been given no such revelation as the Jews possessed, but in which He had never left Himself without witness), as symbolized by a 'fold.' But there does seem to be an intentional avoidance of any word that would necessarily suggest this image here. No mention is made of 'entering in' to the place where these sheep abide, or of the door through which they pass. The word 'lead' is used again, but, whereas in ver. 3 we read that the Shepherd leadeth out His own sheep from the Jewish fold, here He says only 'them also I must lead.' We conclude therefore that it was not without design that Jesus said—not 'I have sheep of another fold,' but—'I have other sheep, not of this fold.' The language of chap. xi. 52 suggests rather that these 'other sheep' have been comparatively shelterless, not drawn together by any shepherd's care, but 'scattered abroad.' Their *past* has been altogether different from that of the devout Israelite; but the *future* of Jew and Gentile shall be the same. As in the case of Israel, so here the whole work of bringing liberty and life is accomplished by Jesus Himself: it is a work that He *must* do (comp. chap. iv. 34, ix. 4, etc.), for it is His Father's will. He seeks the scattered sheep; they come together to Him; He places Himself at the head of this other flock; His voice keeps them near to Him. Passing for a moment from the figure, we recognise once more how Jesus includes all the work of faith and discipleship in '*hearing Him*' (see chap. viii. 31, 40, 47): all that had been wanting to these heirs of a lower dispensation is supplied when they hear His voice.—And they shall become one flock, one shepherd. Then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, One flock, One Shepherd (Ezek. xxxiv. 23, xxxvii. 22-24). As written by the prophet indeed the words have express reference to the reuniting of scattered and divided Israel; but, as in countless other instances, the history of Israel is a parable of the history of the world. The apostolic comment on the verse is found in Ephesians, chap. ii. It is very unfortunate that in the Authorised Version the rendering 'one fold' should have found a place, instead of 'one flock.' The whole thought of the parable is thrown into confusion by this error, which is the less excusable inasmuch as the word which actually does mean 'fold' (a word altogether dissimilar) occurs in the first part of the verse. Our first and greatest translator, William Tyndale, rightly understood the words: the influence of the Vulgate and of Erasmus was in this case prejudicial, and led

Coverdale (who in his own Bible of 1535 had followed Tyndale) to introduce the wrong translation into the Great Bible of 1539. We may well wonder that the Vulgate should contain so strange a mistake; the older Latin version was here correct, but was changed by Jerome.

Ver. 17. *Therefore doth the Father love me, because I lay down my life that I may take it again.* In ver. 15 we have read of the Father's recognition of the Good Shepherd, who gives the highest proof of His devotion to the shepherd's work and possession of the shepherd's character in laying down His life for the sheep. These verses take up and expand that thought, speaking not of recognition only but of love. But it is with ver. 16 that ver. 17 is immediately connected. 'I must' had expressed complete union with His Father's will: the prophecy that follows brought into view the full and certain accomplishment of the Father's purpose. On this account, because of this union of will and this devotion to His purpose, 'the Father' (note once more how perfect is the fitness of this name here) loveth Him,—namely, because He layeth down His life that He may take it again. The two parts of this statement must be closely joined together. The perfect conformity to the Father's will is shown not in laying down the life only, but also in taking it again. The duty of the Shepherd, as set forth in vers. 15, 16, can only in this way be accomplished. He gives His life to purchase life for His sheep, but besides this He must continue to lead the flock of which He is the Only Shepherd. In the execution of His work, therefore, He could not give Himself to death without the purpose of taking His life again: He died that His own may ever live in His life.—But, if the Father's love can rest on the Son who is obedient even unto death, and unto life through death, it is essential that the obedience be entirely free. Hence the words of the next verse.

Ver. 18. *No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again.* He lays down His life of Himself. He has the right to do this, and the right to take the life again.—This commandment I received of my Father. By His Father's express commission He has this right of free decision. For the first time Jesus here speaks of the 'commandment' which He has received, and the use of this term is in full harmony with the position He has assumed throughout the parable, the Shepherd of God's flock, the Servant of Jehovah. On the word 'love' (ver. 17) see note on chap. v. 20: the word found in that

verse is not used here, for the reason there explained. A question is often asked in relation to the words of these verses: if the teaching of Scripture is that the Father raised the Son from the dead, how can Jesus speak as He here does about His resumption of life? But, if the words 'this commandment' be interpreted as above, to refer to the Father's will that the death and resurrection should rest on the free choice of Jesus, the answer is plain: Jesus took His life again in voluntarily accepting the exercise of His Father's power. If we understand the 'commandment' to relate—not to the possession of right or power, but—to the actual death and resurrection, the answer is different, but not less easy: Jesus in rising from the dead freely obeys the Father's will,—the Father's will is still the ultimate source of the action of the Son.

Ver. 19. *There arose a division again among the Jews because of these words.* The effect related in chap. vii. 43, ix. 16, is again produced. This time however (as in chap. viii. 31) 'the Jews' themselves are divided. The preceding parable therefore must have been spoken in the hearing of many who were hostile to Jesus, as well as of Pharisees (chap. ix. 40) who may have been half convinced.

Vers. 20, 21. *And many of them said, He hath a demon, and is mad; why hear ye him? Others said, These are not the sayings of one that is possessed by a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?* In the other instances quoted above the division of feeling had been between 'some' and 'others': here, where 'the Jews' are in question, *many* are driven by the words of Jesus to more bitter hostility, repeating and extending the charge of which we read in chap. vii. 20, viii. 48. But there are others whom the miracle related in chap. ix. had impressed, though at the time they did not stand up against the action of their party (chap. ix. 34). The effect produced on them by the miracle which Jesus wrought is now deepened by His teaching: as in the case of Nicodemus the 'sign' prepared the way for the instruction of the 'words.' In the question asked we have the same association of teaching and miracle. A man possessed by a spirit of evil could not say such things as these: a demon (though he might be supposed able to cast out another demon) could not restore to the blind their sight. It is interesting to observe in these last words the tendency of the Evangelist to close a section with words that recall its opening, thus binding all the parts of a narrative into one whole.

## CHAPTER X. 22-42.

*Jesus at the Feast of the Dedication.—The increasing contrasts of Faith and Unbelief.*

22 **A**ND it was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication,<sup>1</sup> and <sup>2</sup>  
23 it was winter. And Jesus walked in the temple<sup>3</sup> in  
24 <sup>4</sup>Solomon's porch. Then came the Jews round about him,<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Acts iii. 12, v. 12.

<sup>1</sup> There came to pass at that time the feast of the dedication at Jerusalem

<sup>2</sup> omit and <sup>3</sup> temple-courts <sup>4</sup> The Jews therefore surrounded him

- and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? <sup>a</sup>
- 25 If thou be <sup>b</sup> the Christ, tell us plainly. Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed <sup>c</sup> not: <sup>d</sup> the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of <sup>e</sup> me. But <sup>f</sup> ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. <sup>g</sup> My sheep <sup>h</sup> hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: <sup>i</sup> And I give unto them <sup>j</sup> eternal life; and they shall never <sup>k</sup> perish, neither shall any <sup>l</sup> man <sup>m</sup> pluck them out of my hand. <sup>n</sup> My Father, <sup>o</sup> which gave <sup>p</sup> them me, is greater than all; and no <sup>q</sup> man <sup>r</sup> is able to pluck <sup>s</sup> them <sup>t</sup> out of my <sup>u</sup> Father's hand. <sup>v</sup> I and <sup>w</sup> my <sup>x</sup> Father are one. <sup>y</sup> Then <sup>z</sup> the Jews took up stones again to stone him. Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from my <sup>aa</sup> Father; for which of those <sup>ab</sup> works do ye stone me? The Jews answered him, saying, <sup>ac</sup> For a good work we stone thee not; but <sup>ad</sup> for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, <sup>ae</sup> makest thyself God. Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, <sup>af</sup> I said, Ye are gods? If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and <sup>ag</sup> the scripture cannot be broken; Say ye of him, <sup>ah</sup> whom the Father hath <sup>ai</sup> sanctified, <sup>aj</sup> and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the <sup>ak</sup> Son of God? <sup>al</sup> If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. <sup>am</sup> But if I do, though <sup>an</sup> ye believe not me, <sup>ao</sup> believe the works: that ye may know, and believe, <sup>ap</sup> that <sup>aq</sup> the Father <sup>ar</sup> is in me, and I in him. <sup>as</sup> Therefore <sup>at</sup> they <sup>au</sup> sought again to take <sup>av</sup> him: but he escaped <sup>aw</sup> out of their hand.
- 40 And went <sup>ax</sup> away again beyond Jordan into <sup>ay</sup> the place <sup>az</sup> where John at first baptized; <sup>ba</sup> and there he abode. And many resorted <sup>bb</sup> unto him, and said, <sup>bc</sup> John did no miracle: <sup>bd</sup> but all things that <sup>be</sup> John spake of this man were true. And <sup>bf</sup> many believed on <sup>bg</sup> him there.

<sup>5</sup> How long dost thou excite our soul  
<sup>6</sup> concerning <sup>7</sup> omit as I said unto you  
<sup>13</sup> omit them <sup>14</sup> the <sup>15</sup> omit Then  
<sup>17</sup> omit hath <sup>18</sup> consecrated  
<sup>20</sup> even if <sup>21</sup> recognise  
<sup>23</sup> omit Therefore <sup>24</sup> seize  
<sup>26</sup> And he went <sup>27</sup> unto  
<sup>29</sup> came <sup>30</sup> and they said <sup>31</sup> sign

<sup>6</sup> art <sup>7</sup> believe  
<sup>10</sup> one <sup>11</sup> hath given  
<sup>13</sup> these <sup>14</sup> omit saying  
<sup>17</sup> omit the  
<sup>23</sup> in the Father  
<sup>25</sup> and he went forth  
<sup>28</sup> was at first baptizing  
<sup>32</sup> whatsoever <sup>33</sup> in

CONTENTS. The contest with the Jews is continued. The section strikingly illustrates the plan of the gospel (1) by taking up again that claim of Jesus to be the Son of God which had, more than anything else, provoked the opposition of His enemies; (2) by bringing into notice His return to Bethany beyond Jordan, where He had been first made manifest by the Baptist to Israel, and where confession is now made by 'many' that everything spoken of Him by the Baptist at His entrance upon His public ministry had proved

true. We have here, therefore, the culminating-point of the conflict, and the pause before the highest manifestation by Jesus of Himself as the Resurrection and the Life. The subordinate parts are—(1) x. 22-39; (2) vers. 40-42.

Ver. 22. There came to pass at that time the feast of the dedication at Jerusalem: it was winter. With these words we enter on a new scene, where the Evangelist first sets before us the outward circumstances, expressing them, after his usual manner, by three clauses. Where

and how the weeks intervening between the feast of Tabernacles in chap. vii. and the feast now mentioned were spent John does not inform us. Once more he shows clearly that his intention is not to give a continuous narrative; for, though he has clearly defined two points of time (the two festivals), he records in the interval events of but two or three days. The festival here spoken of was instituted by Judas Maccabeus, B.C. 165. For three years the sanctuary had been desolate, and on the altar of burnt-offering had been placed an altar for idol-worship. After the victory gained at Bethsura (or Bethzur), the first thought of Judas was to 'cleanse and dedicate the sanctuary' which had been profaned. The altar of burnt-offering was taken down, and a new altar built; and all Israel 'ordained that the days of the dedication of the altar should be kept in their season from year to year by the space of eight days, from the five and twentieth day of the month Cisleu, with mirth and gladness' (1 Macc. iv. 59). The date would correspond to a late day in our month of December. We do not find in the following verses any words of our Lord which directly relate to this festival; but those readers who have noted how carefully the Evangelist points to the idea of every Jewish feast as fulfilled in Jesus will not suppose that there is an exception here. Having heard the words of chap. ii. 19, he could not but associate his Lord with the temple: and a feast which commemorated the reconstruction of the temple must have had great significance in his eyes. The mention of the time of year connects itself naturally with the choice, spoken of in the next verse, of the covered walk ('Solomon's Porch'); but the mode in which the fact is mentioned recalls at once chap. xiii. 30, where every one acknowledges that the closing words are more than a note of time: the 'night' there and the 'winter' here are felt by the narrator to be true emblems of the events which he records.

Ver. 23. **And Jesus walked in the temple-courts, in Solomon's porch.** The 'porch' which bore Solomon's name was a covered colonnade on the eastern side of the outer court of the temple. According to Josephus this 'porch' was the work of Solomon: at all events we may well believe that the massive foundations were laid by him, though the cloisters which he built were in ruins when Herod began his restoration of the temple.

Ver. 24. **The Jews therefore surrounded him, and said unto him, How long dost thou excite our soul? If thou art the Christ, tell us plainly.** The recurrence of the oft-repeated term 'the Jews' is a sufficient indication of the tone and design of the question asked. Taking advantage, perhaps, of the fact that Jesus was in the cloisters of the temple-courts, and not now in the midst of a listening 'multitude,' His enemies encompass Him, determined to gain from Him such an avowal of His Messiahship as shall enable them to carry out their designs against His life.—The expression which in the Authorised Version is rendered 'make us to doubt' has received various explanations. That adopted by us is perhaps, upon the whole, the most probable. Another, however, may be suggested by what is at least a curious coincidence, that the verb used by the Jews is the same as that used by our Lord for 'taketh' in the first clause of ver. 18, and that the noun now rendered 'soul' is more probably 'life,' and is indeed so translated in ver. 17.

Following these hints we venture to ask whether the words may not mean, 'How long dost thou take away our life?' They will then be one of those unconscious prophecies, of those unconscious testimonies to the going on of something deeper than they were themselves aware of, which John delights to find on the lips of the opponents of Jesus. They were stirring up their enmity against Him to a pitch which was to lead them to take away His life; and by their words they confess that He is taking away theirs. It is not meant, in what has now been said, to assert that the Jews actually intended to express this, but only that John sees it in the language which they use. They meant only, How long dost thou excite us or keep us in suspense? Put an end to this by speaking plainly,—or (more literally) by speaking out, telling all Thou hast to tell.

Ver. 25. **Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believe not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness concerning me.** A demand so made was never granted by Jesus. They had already received sufficient evidence, and to this He refers them. He again speaks of both word and deed. What He had said (see chap. v. 19, viii. 36, 56, 58) had shown clearly who He is; what He had done had borne witness concerning Him (see chap. v. 36). But both word and works had failed to lead them to belief in Him.

Ver. 26. **But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep.** In chap. viii. 47 He had said that they heard not His words because they were not of God: the same thought is expressed here, but with a change of figure. There is no reference to an essential or necessary state, to any 'decree' through the operation of which they were incapable of faith. They have not the character, the disposition, of His sheep; through this moral defect (for which they are themselves responsible, see chap. iii. 19, etc.) they will not believe. This is brought out more fully in the next verse.

Vers. 27, 28. **My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never periah, neither shall any one pluck them out of my hand.** In these verses is given a description of the true sheep. The description is rhythmical, and rises to a climax. The first couplet expresses some property of the sheep, the second a corresponding attitude or action of the Shepherd; and each successive couplet takes us into a higher sphere of thought and blessing.

1. My sheep hear my voice,  
And I know them;
2. And they follow me,  
And I give unto them eternal life,
3. And they shall never perish,  
And no one shall pluck them out of my hand.

The couplets, as will be seen, express successively the mutual recognition of sheep and Shepherd (for this is the meaning conveyed by the word here rendered 'know,'—see the note on vers. 14, 15); the *present* gift of eternal life to those who follow Jesus (see chap. viii. 12, etc.); the *lasting* safety of those who thus follow Him and abide with Him. The description presents a complete contrast to the action of 'the Jews' who were not of His sheep (ver. 26); who, though He had so often manifested Himself to them by word and work, yet had never recognised His voice, but came to Him saying, 'If Thou be the Christ, tell us plainly.'

From this contrast arises the order of the clauses in these verses, an order different from that in ver. 14.

Vers. 29, 30. *My Father, which hath given them me, is greater than all; and no one is able to pluck out of the Father's hand. I and the Father are one.* The apparent object of these words is to establish more completely the safety of His sheep. But in answering this purpose they also answer a still higher end; they are a revelation of Jesus Himself. In effect they give a reply to the question of the Jews, but such a reply as only the heart prepared to listen to the truth will receive. Jesus has spoken of 'My sheep;' they are His by reason of His Father's gift. The Father who has given will maintain the gift: and He is greater than all who could seek to snatch away the sheep,—none can snatch aught out of the hand of the Father. The progress of the thought is perfectly simple, but the transition from 'my Father' to 'the Father' is full of meaning. The latter name is fitly used, since here the axiom of Divine Almightiness is expressed; the same name, moreover, is most appropriate in a passage which traces the development of God's purpose to make men His sons through His Son. Jesus has used the same words of Himself and of the Father; 'no one shall pluck them out of my hand,'—'no one can pluck out of the Father's hand.' He might have left His hearers to draw the certain inference, but He will so far grant their request as to 'tell' this 'plainly': 'I and the Father are one.' There is perhaps nothing in this saying that goes beyond the revelation of chap. v.; but its terseness and its simple force give it a new significance. Unity of action, purpose, power, may be what the context chiefly requires us to recognise as expressed in these words; but the impression which was made upon the Jews (ver. 31), the fuller statement of ver. 38, the analogy of chap. v. and of expressions (still more closely parallel) in chap. xvii. forbid us to depart from the most ancient Christian exposition which sees in this saying of Jesus no less than a claim of unity of essence with the Father.

Ver. 31. *The Jews took up stones again to stone him.* Their view of the blasphemy of His words is given more fully in ver. 33. The word 'again' carries us back to chap. viii. 59, where a similar attempt is recorded, but in less definite language. There we see the Jews taking up, hastily snatching up, stones that lay near, to 'cast on Him': here their resolve to inflict the penalty for blasphemy appears more distinctly in their attempt to 'stone Him.' The two words rendered 'take up' are also different, and it is possible that the Evangelist here presents the Jews as bearing up the stones on high, in the very act of preparing to bury Him beneath them. The climax ought not to pass unobserved.—They are arrested by His words.

Ver. 32. *Jesus answered them, Many good works have I showed you from the Father; for which of these works do ye stone me?* On the the word 'good' see the note on ver. 11: every work He has shown them has borne the perfect stamp of a work noble and perfect in its kind, for He has shown it 'from the Father,' who sent Him and ever works with and in Him. He knew that they were enraged at His word, and yet He speaks here of His *works*: the works and the words are essentially one,—alike manifestations of Himself.

Ver. 33. *The Jews answered him, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God.* These words show conclusively how the saying of ver. 30 was understood by those who heard it: they perceive now who is meant by 'the Father' (comp. viii. 27), and see that to claim oneness with Him is to claim Deity. All recollection of 'good works' and indeed all evidence whatever they cast away, treating such a claim as incapable of support by any evidence.

Ver. 34. *Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods?* The quotation is from Ps. lxxxii. (the word 'law' being used, as in chap. xv. 25 and some other places, for the Old Testament scriptures generally), 'I have said, Ye are gods, and all of you are children of the Most High; but ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes.' The psalm is a reproof of unrighteous judges. Its opening words bring before us God judging 'among the gods,'—that is, among the judges, for the sacred name is in other passages (Ex. xxi. 6, xxii. 8, and probably xxii. 28) given to those who were to the people the representatives of God, and gave judgment in His name. In following verses of the psalm as far as ver. 7, it is supposed by some that God Himself is the Speaker (comp. Ps. 1.). If so, the words 'Ye are gods' are here quoted as if spoken by God; and in the next verse 'he called' must be similarly explained. It seems more likely, however, that the rebuke of the judges' injustice is administered by the psalmist in his own person; and in ver. 35 the meaning will either be that the law 'called,' or the speaker implied in the emphatic 'I,' viz. the psalmist writing under inspiration from God and expressing His mind. In any case the pronoun 'I' is strongly marked,—I myself, who utter the rebuke and had foretold the punishment, had borne witness to the dignity of the position of the judge.

Vers. 35, 36. *If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken; say ye of him, whom the Father consecrated, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am Son of God?* If (1) the speaker in the psalm called men 'gods' because the word of God (the expression of God's will, which, as judges, they were bound to carry out) was given to them; and if (2) this passage of scripture cannot be broken, cannot be set aside, but must be taken as inspired by God, how can they accuse Jesus of blasphemy? To the judges the 'word of God came': Jesus was sent into the world by the Father to declare His will, as Himself 'The Word.' The judges were commissioned by God for the work to which they proved unfaithful: He, consecrated by the Father to His work, had but fulfilled His trust when He declared Himself Son of God. If then the judge, as a partial and imperfect expression of God (if we may so speak) to the people received the name of 'god,' with infinitely higher right may Jesus call Himself Son of God. His claim of the name was in itself no foundation for their charge: their own law should have taught them this.

Ver. 37. *If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not.* In the last verse 'the Father' was the Name of which Jesus spoke, thus bringing together in thought God who spoke in the psalm and His Father who sent Him into the world. Here, after the mention of 'the Son of God,' He says 'the works of my Father.' If He does no

such works they have no right to believe His word and acknowledge His claims. It is otherwise if He does them.

Ver. 38. But if I do, even if ye believe not me, believe the works: that ye may know, and recognise, that the Father is in me, and I in the Father. If He does the works of His Father, then, even although they might be unwilling to accept His witness respecting Himself, the works bear a testimony they are bound to receive. Receiving this testimony and thus learning that the works of Jesus are the Father's works, men will know that He and the Father are one, the Father abiding in Him, and He in the Father. But this is not a truth learnt once for all. The words of Jesus are: that ye may 'know' (being brought to conviction by the testimony of the works) and (from that point onwards continually) 'recognise' . . . Their eyes once opened, they will ever see in the works tokens of the Father's presence.

Ver. 39. They sought again to seize him: and he went forth out of their hand. 'Again' seems to point back to chap. vii., where the same word 'seize' is found three times (vers. 30, 32, 44). We cannot suppose that the Jews had laid aside their design of stoning Him in consequence of the words just spoken, for these words would either lead to faith or repel to greater enmity. For some reason not mentioned they now seek not to stone Him on the spot, but to seize Him and carry Him away. As in chap. viii. 59, 'He went forth' out of their hand, thus illustrating again His own words in ver. 18.

Ver. 40. And he went away again beyond Jordan unto the place where John was at first baptizing; and there he abode. The place in which John at first baptized was that mentioned in chap. i. 28 (not in chap. iii. 22), viz. Bethany beyond Jordan. But why does the Evangelist here make special mention of this fact? It would seem that we have another illustration of his tendency at the close of a period of the history to go back to the beginning of that period. He gathers together the whole ministry of Jesus up to this time under one point of view. With the next

chapter we really enter on the final scene: in the raising of Lazarus the work of Jesus reaches its culminating-point; by that miracle His rejection and condemnation by the Jews is made certain. And as in a mountain ascent the traveller may pause before attempting the highest peak, and survey the long path by which he has ascended, so the Evangelist here pauses before relating the last struggle, and (by mentioning the association of the place and not the name of the place itself) leads his readers to survey with him all the period of the ministry of Him to whom John bore witness. Whatever Jesus had since done or said ratified the witness borne by the Baptist. Possibly it was because of John's testimony that Jesus sought this spot: near it may have lived many whose hearts had been prepared for His teaching. What He did during His stay in Bethany beyond Jordan, or how long was His stay, we do not know. We may certainly suppose that He taught; and the next verse suggests that 'signs' were wrought.

Vers. 41, 42. And many came unto him; and they said, John did no sign: but all things whatsoever John spake of this man were true. And many believed in him there. How great the contrast between the scene presented here and those of the preceding chapters! He came to the Jews, but, in spite of works and word, they rejected Him: now, in His retirement, many come unto Him, and many believe in Him. For Jesus this period of rest is a period not of peace only, but also of joy in successful toil. Another contrast implied is between Jesus and the Baptist 'who did no sign' but bare witness only. He being dead yet speaketh, in that his testimony is leading men to Jesus in the very place of his own ministry: and there also witness is borne to him, in the emphatic acknowledgment that all his words concerning Jesus had proved true. Nay, even beyond the experience of these believers we may see that this saying expresses truth, for in His most memorable discourses Jesus fulfils the words of the Baptist recorded in chap. i. of this Gospel, 'He that cometh after me has become before me, because He was before me' (i. 15, 27, 30).

## CHAPTER XI. 1-44.

### *The Raising of Lazarus.—Jesus the Resurrection and the Life.*

- 1 NOW a certain *man* was sick, *named*<sup>1</sup> Lazarus, of <sup>a</sup> Bethany, <sup>a</sup> Matt. xxi.  
 2 the town<sup>2</sup> of <sup>b</sup> Mary and her sister Martha. (It<sup>3</sup> was <sup>b</sup> Luke x. 38,  
<sup>c</sup> that Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped <sup>c</sup> Chap. xii. 3.  
 3 his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.) There-  
 fore his sisters<sup>4</sup> sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom  
 4 thou lovest is sick. When<sup>5</sup> Jesus heard *that*, he said, This  
 sickness is not unto death, but for<sup>d</sup> the glory of God, that the  
 5 Son of God might<sup>e</sup> be glorified thereby. Now Jesus loved  
 6 Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus. When he had heard

<sup>1</sup> omit named

<sup>4</sup> The sisters therefore

<sup>2</sup> from the village

<sup>5</sup> But when

<sup>3</sup> Now it

<sup>e</sup> may

<sup>d</sup> Ver. 40,  
chap. ix. 3.







*From a Photograph.*

**BETHANY.**

therefore that he was sick, he abode<sup>7</sup> two days still in the same  
 7 place where he was.<sup>8</sup> Then after that saith he to *his*<sup>9</sup> disciples,  
 8 Let us go into Judea again. *His*<sup>10</sup> disciples say unto him,  
 Master,<sup>11</sup> the 'Jews of late sought<sup>12</sup> to stone thee; and goest<sup>Chap. x. 31.</sup>  
 9 thou thither again? Jesus answered, Are there not twelve  
 hours in<sup>13</sup> the day? / If any<sup>14</sup> man walk in the day, he / Chap. ix. 4.  
 10 stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world. But  
 'if a man walk in the night, he stumbleth, because there is no<sup>Chap. xii.</sup>  
 11 light<sup>15</sup> in him. These things said he: and after that he saith 35.  
 unto them, Our friend Lazarus<sup>16</sup> sleepeth; <sup>17</sup> but I go, that I<sup>Chap. xii.</sup>  
 12 may awake him out of sleep. Then said his disciples,<sup>17</sup> Lord, 35.  
 13 if he sleep,<sup>16</sup> he shall do well.<sup>18</sup> Howbeit Jesus spake<sup>19</sup> of his  
 death: but they thought that he had spoken<sup>20</sup> of taking of rest  
 14 in sleep. Then said Jesus<sup>21</sup> unto them plainly, Lazarus is  
 15 dead. And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to  
 the intent ye may believe; <sup>22</sup> nevertheless let us go unto him.  
 16 Then said 'Thomas,<sup>23</sup> which is called Didymus,<sup>24</sup> unto his<sup>Chap. xiv. 5.</sup>  
 fellow-disciples, Let us also go, that we may die with him. xx. 24,  
 17 Then when<sup>25</sup> Jesus came, he found that he had *lain* in the xxi. 8;  
 18 grave<sup>26</sup> <sup>27</sup> four days already. Now 'Bethany was<sup>28</sup> nigh unto<sup>Matt. x. 3.</sup>  
 19 Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off: And many of the Jews  
 came<sup>29</sup> to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their  
 20 brother. Then Martha, as soon as<sup>30</sup> she heard that Jesus was  
 coming, went and met him: but Mary sat *still* in the house.  
 21 Then said Martha<sup>30</sup> unto Jesus, <sup>31</sup> Lord, if thou hadst been here,<sup>Chap. xiv. 5.</sup>  
 22 my brother had not died. But I know, that even now,<sup>31</sup> what- xx. 24,  
 23 soever<sup>32</sup> thou wilt<sup>33</sup> ask of God, God will give *it*<sup>34</sup> thee. Jesus xxi. 8;  
 24 saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again. Martha saith<sup>35</sup>  
 unto him, 'I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection<sup>Matt. x. 3.</sup>  
 25 at<sup>36</sup> the last day. Jesus said unto her, 'I am the resurrection,  
 and the<sup>37</sup> life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead,<sup>Chap. xiv. 5.</sup>  
 26 yet shall he live: And whosoever<sup>37</sup> liveth and believeth in me xx. 24,  
 27 'shall never die. Believest thou this? She saith unto him, xxi. 8;  
 Yea, Lord: 'I believe<sup>38</sup> that thou art the Christ, the 'Son of  
 28 God, <sup>39</sup> which should come<sup>40</sup> into the world. And when she had  
 so said, she went her way,<sup>40</sup> and called Mary her sister secretly,<sup>41</sup>

<sup>7</sup> at that time indeed he abode      <sup>8</sup> in the place where he was two days  
<sup>9</sup> he saith to the      <sup>10</sup> The  
<sup>11</sup> Rabbi      <sup>12</sup> but now the Jews were seeking      <sup>13</sup> of      <sup>14</sup> a  
<sup>15</sup> because the light is not      <sup>16</sup> hath fallen asleep  
<sup>17</sup> The disciples therefore said unto him      <sup>18</sup> he shall be saved  
<sup>19</sup> had spoken      <sup>20</sup> he spake      <sup>21</sup> Then therefore Jesus said  
<sup>22</sup> to the intent ye may believe, that I was not there      <sup>23</sup> Thomas therefore  
<sup>24</sup> add said      <sup>25</sup> When therefore      <sup>26</sup> tomb      <sup>27</sup> is  
<sup>28</sup> had come      <sup>29</sup> Martha therefore when      <sup>30</sup> Martha therefore said  
<sup>31</sup> And even now I know that      <sup>32</sup> add things      <sup>33</sup> shalt      <sup>34</sup> omit it  
<sup>35</sup> said      <sup>36</sup> have died      <sup>37</sup> And every one that      <sup>38</sup> have believed  
<sup>39</sup> he that cometh      <sup>40</sup> went away      <sup>41</sup> omit secretly

29 saying, " The Master <sup>43</sup> is come, and calleth for <sup>44</sup> thee. As <sup>v</sup> See chap. xiii. 13.  
soon as she heard *that*, she arose <sup>45</sup> quickly, and came <sup>46</sup> unto <sup>Comp. chap. i. 38.</sup>  
30 him. Now Jesus was not yet come into the town, <sup>47</sup> but was <sup>48</sup>  
31 in that place where Martha met him. <sup>w</sup> The Jews then <sup>49</sup> which <sup>ww</sup> Ver. 19.  
were with her in the house, and comforted <sup>50</sup> her, when they  
saw Mary, that she rose up hastily <sup>51</sup> and went out, followed  
her, saying, <sup>52</sup> She goeth unto the grave <sup>53</sup> to weep <sup>54</sup> there.  
32 Then when Mary was come <sup>55</sup> where Jesus was, and saw him,  
she fell down at his feet, <sup>56</sup> saying unto him, <sup>x</sup> Lord, if thou <sup>x</sup> Ver. 21.  
33 hadst been here, my brother had not died. When Jesus there-  
fore saw her weeping, <sup>57</sup> and the Jews also <sup>58</sup> weeping <sup>59</sup> which  
came with her, he <sup>y</sup> groaned <sup>y</sup> in the spirit, and was troubled, <sup>y</sup> Ver. 38.  
34 And <sup>60</sup> said, Where have ye laid him? They said <sup>61</sup> unto him, <sup>s</sup> Mark viii.  
35, 36 Lord, come and see. <sup>a</sup> Jesus wept. Then said the Jews, <sup>62</sup> <sup>12: chap. xiii. 21.</sup>  
37 Behold how he loved him! And <sup>63</sup> some of them said, Could <sup>a</sup> Luke xix. 41.  
not this man, <sup>b</sup> which opened the eyes of the blind, <sup>64</sup> have <sup>b</sup> Chap. ix. 6.  
38 caused that even this man should not have died? <sup>65</sup> Jesus  
therefore again <sup>c</sup> groaning in himself, <sup>66</sup> cometh to the grave. <sup>c</sup> Ver. 33.  
39 It <sup>67</sup> was a cave, and <sup>d</sup> a stone lay upon <sup>68</sup> it. Jesus said, <sup>70</sup> Take <sup>d</sup> See chap. xx. 1.  
ye away the stone. Martha, <sup>71</sup> the sister of him that was dead, <sup>72</sup>  
saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for <sup>e</sup> he hath <sup>e</sup> Ver. 17.  
40 been *dead* <sup>73</sup> four days. <sup>74</sup> Jesus saith unto her, <sup>f</sup> Said I not <sup>f</sup> Ver. 25  
unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, <sup>75</sup> thou shouldest see  
41 <sup>g</sup> the glory of God? Then they took away the stone <sup>76</sup> *from* <sup>g</sup> Ver. 4.  
*the place* where the dead was laid. <sup>77</sup> And Jesus <sup>h</sup> lifted up <sup>h</sup> Chap. xvii. 1.  
his eyes, and said, <sup>i</sup> Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard <sup>i</sup> Matt. xi. 25.  
42 me. And I <sup>79</sup> knew that thou hearest me always: but <sup>h</sup> because <sup>h</sup> Chap. xii. 30.  
of the people <sup>80</sup> which stand by <sup>81</sup> I said *it*, that they may <sup>i</sup> be- <sup>i</sup> Chap. xvi.  
43 lieve that thou hast sent <sup>82</sup> me. And when he thus had spoken, <sup>87, 30.</sup>  
44 he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. And he that <sup>xvii. 8, 21.</sup>  
was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: <sup>83</sup>  
and <sup>m</sup> his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith <sup>m</sup> Chap. ix. 9.  
unto them Loose him, and let him go.

<sup>43</sup> add secretly<sup>43</sup> Teacher<sup>44</sup> omit for<sup>45</sup> And she, when she heard it, arose<sup>46</sup> went<sup>47</sup> village<sup>48</sup> add still<sup>49</sup> therefore<sup>50</sup> and were comforting<sup>51</sup> quickly<sup>52</sup> supposing<sup>53</sup> that she went unto the tomb<sup>54</sup> lament<sup>55</sup> Mary therefore when she came<sup>56</sup> seeing him fell at his feet<sup>57</sup> lamenting<sup>58</sup> omit also<sup>59</sup> he was moved with indignation in his spirit and troubled himself<sup>60</sup> add he <sup>61</sup> say<sup>62</sup> The Jews therefore said<sup>63</sup> But<sup>64</sup> of him that was blind<sup>65</sup> that this man also should not die<sup>66</sup> moved with indignation in himself<sup>67</sup> tomb<sup>68</sup> Now it<sup>69</sup> against<sup>70</sup> saith<sup>71</sup> omit Martha<sup>72</sup> The sister of him that was dead, Martha<sup>73</sup> omit dead <sup>74</sup> add here<sup>75</sup> if thou believedst<sup>76</sup> They took away the stone therefore<sup>77</sup> omit from . . . laid<sup>78</sup> thou heardest<sup>79</sup> add myself<sup>80</sup> multitude<sup>81</sup> standeth around<sup>82</sup> didst send<sup>83</sup> gravebands

**CONTENTS.** The manifestation of Jesus by Himself is about to terminate so far at least as the world is concerned, and it does so in His revealing Himself as the Resurrection and the Life, the Conqueror of death in the very height of its power. The raising of Lazarus illustrates this. The account as a whole divides itself into two subordinate parts—(1) vers. 1-16; (2) vers. 17-44.

**Ver. 1.** Now a certain man was sick, *Lazarus, of Bethany, from the village of Mary and her sister Martha.* The scene of the miracle to be related in this chapter is Bethany, a village (now small and poor) about two miles south-east of Jerusalem over the southern shoulder of the Mount of Olives. Neither here nor in chap. i. 44 is the use of the two prepositions 'of' and 'from' intended to point to two different places, one the present abode, the other the original home; but Bethany itself is 'the village of Mary and her sister Martha.' The circumstance referred to in ver. 2 probably accounts for the prior mention of Mary, for Martha appears to have been the elder sister (see Luke x. 38). The name Lazarus is Hebrew (a shortened form of Eleazar) but with a Greek termination.

**Ver. 2.** (Now it was that Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.) These words seem intended to bring into view the closeness of the relation between Jesus and Mary. There are particulars in which this narrative closely resembles that of chap. ii. 1-11: as there we have the closest tie of kindred, so here we read of the most intimate friendship. But the one tie as well as the other must yield to the voice of God. The anointing was when John wrote well and widely known (see Matt. xxvi. 13): it is here specially mentioned in anticipation of chap. xiii.

**Ver. 3.** The sisters therefore sent unto him saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick. Their confidence in the love and in the power of Jesus is shown by the absence of any request: the message is a tender and delicate expression of their need. With the description of Lazarus compare chap. xx. 2 (where the same verb for 'love' is used), 'the disciple whom Jesus loved.'

**Ver. 4.** But when Jesus heard that, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified thereby. The reply of Jesus is not represented as addressed to the messengers sent, or to the apostles, though probably spoken in the hearing of both. The point of importance is the foreknowledge of Jesus, to whom were even now present both the miracle and the result. The first result is expressed in the closing words, 'that the Son of God may be glorified thereby;' the ultimate aim in the former clause, 'for the glory of God.' The true design of the sickness is not to bring death to Lazarus, but to glorify the Son of God, and by this means to bring glory to the Father. Compare chap. xvii. 1.

**Ver. 5.** Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus. This simple record of His love for this family (note how significant is the separate mention of each one of the three) connects itself both with ver. 4 and also with the statement of vers. 5 and 6, these verses really constituting one sentence. The object of the Evangelist is to set before us the mind of Jesus: in

ver. 4 we see the first principle of all, supreme regard to the glory of God; here His love for those on whom the affliction must fall, and whom (ver. 6) He cannot help save at the hour appointed by His Father. But when that hour has come, His obedience to His Father's will and His love for His sorrowing friends unite in leading Him to Bethany (ver. 7).—The word 'loved' used in this verse is different from that which we find in ver. 3. The sisters use that which belongs to tender human friendship (see note on chap. v. 20); the Evangelist the more lofty word, which so often expresses the relation of Jesus to His disciples. He loved them with a love with which the thought of His Father's love to Himself is mingled.

**Ver. 6.** When he had heard therefore that he was sick, at that time indeed he abode in the place where he was two days. 'Therefore' is explained by the two verses which precede (see the last note). He cannot accept the moment suggested by man (comp. chap. ii. 4); He cannot follow at once the prompting of His affection for disciples. He will go to assuage their grief, but only at the moment appointed by the Father's will.

**Ver. 7.** Then after that he saith to the disciples, Let us go into Judea again. Jesus does not say 'to Bethany,' but to 'Judea;' for He knows that this visit to Bethany will bring Him again into the midst of His enemies, 'the Jews,' and will lead to a development of their hatred and malice which will find satisfaction only in His death. In the full consciousness of what awaits Him He prepares to depart for Bethany.

**Ver. 8.** The disciples say unto him, Rabbi, but now the Jews were seeking to stone thee; and goest thou thither again? The words 'but now' (only just now) seem to show that the sojourn in Perea (chap. x. 40) was short. The disciples see clearly that to go to Bethany is as perilous as to return to Jerusalem, where He has but now escaped from the rage of 'the Jews' (chap. x. 31).

**Vers. 9, 10.** Jesus answered, Are there not twelve hours of the day? If a man walk in the day he stumbleth not, because he seeth the light of this world. But if a man walk in the night he stumbleth, because the light is not in him. This is the parable of chap. ix. 4 in an expanded form. By the light which God makes to shine in the world, He marks out twelve hours as the appointed time for 'walking,' for active work; by the absence of this light, the night is marked out as the time when there can be no such work. So is the life of every man ordered by God. There is the appointed time for work, indicated by the Providence of God: in following the intimations of His will the man will 'not stumble,' will take no false step. He will not shorten the proper time for 'walking;' for throughout the appointed twelve hours the finger of God will show the appointed work. It is only when man misses the Divine guidance, doing what no providential teaching has marked out, that he stumbleth: then he may well stumble, for the light (which during the day shines round him and entering the eye becomes within him light for guidance) is no longer in him. As applied to Himself the words of Jesus mean: 'Following the will of God which leads Me into Judea again, I am walking in the light, I cannot "stumble" whatever may befall Me there.'

**Ver. 11.** These things said he: and after that

he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus hath fallen asleep; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep. No second message has been sent to Him; by His own Divine knowledge He speaks of the death of His friend.

Ver. 12. The disciples therefore said unto him, Lord, if he hath fallen asleep, he shall be saved. We can hardly escape the thought that they have in their mind some tidings brought at the same time with the message of ver. 3, descriptive of the nature of the illness. Was it some raging fever that threatened the life of Lazarus, then, if calm slumber has come upon him, he is safe! Surely therefore it is no longer necessary for their Lord to expose Himself to peril by returning to Judea.

Ver. 13. Howbeit Jesus had spoken of his death: but they thought that he spake of taking of rest in sleep. The figure can hardly have been here used by Jesus for the first time. The misconception of His meaning would seem to have arisen from His words in ver. 4, and from His delay in setting out for Bethany.

Vers. 14, 15. Then therefore Jesus said unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead. And I am glad for your sakes, to the intent ye may believe, that I was not there; nevertheless let us go unto him. The words 'for your sakes' are explained by the clause which follows, 'that ye may believe.' Already they believed in Him; but 'every new flight of faith is in its degree a new beginning of faith, comp. chap. ii. 11' (Meyer). Had he come to Bethany while Lazarus lay sick, He would have healed his sickness; but great as might have been the miracle if He had done so, or if, arriving when Lazarus had just breathed his last, He had called back the departing spirit, in neither case would the disciples have seen the crowning 'manifestation' of their Lord, or have believed in Him as 'the Resurrection and the Life.' The disciples are now awakened to the fact that they are moving into the presence of death.

Ver. 16. Thomas therefore (which is called Didymus) said unto his fellow-disciples, Let us also go, that we may die with him. That is, with Jesus (not with Lazarus). It is plain that Jesus cannot be turned aside by their counsels or prayers; He is certainly about to return to Judea, at the peril of His life. As they cannot save Him they may at least share His fate. This is the exhortation of Thomas to his fellow-disciples; and it would seem that they shared his feelings, for the word 'fellow-disciples' (not found elsewhere in the New Testament), as compared with 'the other disciples' of xx. 25, binds all the disciples into one. The language is undoubtedly that of fervent love to Jesus, but it is also the language of despair and vanished hope. This is the end of all,—death; not the Messianic kingdom, not life. Whether we are right in thinking that this feeling was shared by the other disciples, or not, it is very natural that Thomas should be the one to give expression to it. From chap. xiv. 5, xx. 24, 25, we clearly perceive that sight is what he wants: when he sees not he gives himself up to despondency. It is remarkable that at every mention of this apostle John adds the Greek interpretation (Didymus, that is *Twin*) of the Aramaic name. It has been supposed that Didymus is the name with which Gentile Christians became most familiar; but if so it is singular that no other name than Thomas is found in the Synoptic Gospels and the

Acts. By others it is urged that the word 'Twin' is used with symbolic meaning, pointing to the two-fold nature of this apostle, in whom unbelief and faith, hope and tendency to despair, were strangely blended. With this statement the first paragraph of this narrative ends. The last words, 'Let us also go, that we may die with him,' fitly close a section which, as Luthardt remarks, is dominated by the thought of death.

Ver. 17. When therefore Jesus came, he found that he had lain in the tomb four days already. The situation of the Perea Bethany (chap. x. 40) is so uncertain that we are unable to give a certain explanation of these four days. The distance from Jerusalem to the nearest point of the country beyond Jordan is not great (not much more than twenty miles), and could be traversed in a day. If then this was the situation of Bethany beyond Jordan, Jesus would reach the village of Martha and Mary on the second day from the commencement of His journey, and the fourth day from the reception of the news that Lazarus was sick (ver. 6). In this case the death of Lazarus must speedily have followed the departure of the messenger, and according to Eastern custom the body must on the same day have been laid in the tomb. Even if Bethany in Perea be placed at a somewhat greater distance from Jerusalem, this explanation removes all difficulties. Still it must be confessed that it is very natural to regard ver. 11 as spoken at the moment of death, though there is nothing in the words 'hath fallen asleep' to compel us to take this view. In that case the journey (if commenced immediately) must have occupied more than two whole days; yet even in this there is nothing difficult or improbable. Jesus reaches the village where the sisters lived on the fourth day of their mourning, when the lapse of time had brought home to them the hopelessness of their case.

Ver. 18. Now Bethany is nigh unto Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off. This verse is of importance, not merely as preparing for ver. 19, but also as showing that Jesus in visiting Bethany was coming into the immediate presence of His enemies. They had pronounced Him a blasphemer, and they were determined to bring Him to the blasphemer's death (x. 31, 39).

Ver. 19. And many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother. There is no ground whatever for understanding 'the Jews' in any other sense than that which the expression *regularly* bears in this Gospel. Amongst those who came to pay to the bereaved sisters the visits of condolence during the seven days of mourning, were many of the leaders of the people, many who were also leaders in hostility to Jesus. It is evident that the family of Bethany was one of distinction, and even their friendship to Jesus could not be a bar to their receiving from the Jews these offices of respect and sympathy. But this is not the only contrast which the mention of the Jews calls forth. As leaders of the people, ruling in 'the city of their solemnities,' they were the representatives of their Church and religion; and the 'comfort' they can offer in the presence of death is no inapt symbol of all that Judaism could do for the mourner. Thus on the one side we have human sorrow and the vanity of human comfort in the presence of death; on the other side we have Him who is the Life.

Ver. 20. Martha therefore, when she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him; but Mary sat still in the house. Every reader must be struck with the remarkable coincidence between this narrative and that of Luke x. 38, 39, in the portraiture of the two sisters. Martha, even in the midst of her sorrow occupied with attention to family concerns, sees the messenger who announces the approach of Jesus and goes forth to meet Him, outside the village (ver. 30). Mary, absorbed in her grief, hears nothing of the message: it is not until Martha returns to her that she learns that Jesus is near.

Ver. 21. Martha therefore said unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. Her first words express no reproach, but only the bitter thought of help come too late. In His presence her brother could not have died (comp. ver. 15). Of the possibility that Jesus might have spoken the word of help, even though their message might reach Him too late to bring Him to their dying brother, she says nothing, though the Jews, unchecked by the reverence of love, freely ask the question among themselves (ver. 37).

Ver. 22. And even now I know that whatsoever things thou shalt ask of God, God will give thee. The words of this verse are very remarkable. The presence of the great Friend and Helper seems to give a sudden quickening to Martha's faith. She had probably heard of the words of Jesus when the tidings of the sickness of Lazarus reached Him (ver. 4); and these words (which no doubt sorrow of heart and painful waiting had almost banished from her thought) surely gave ground for hope 'even now.' And yet, though truly expressive of the firmest confidence in Jesus, her words are vague; and the later narrative seems to prove that no definite expectation was present to her mind. The language is rather that of one who so believes in Jesus as to be assured that, where He is, help and blessing cannot be absent.

Ver. 23. Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again. The words are designedly ambiguous,—spoken to try her faith. Like our Lord's parables, they contain that of which faith may take hold and be raised into a higher region, but which unbelief or dulness of heart will miss. Will the hope that Martha's words have vaguely expressed now become clear and definite? At all events the answer of Jesus will make her conscious to herself of what her faith really was.

Ver. 24. Martha said unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. Jesus has told her only what she knew, for every true Israelite believed that in the last day the just would rise. How vague the thought embodied in these words can hardly be understood by us, in whom the same words awaken memories of a Resurrection in the past which brings to us true knowledge of the resurrection at the last day. And if even with us, in the first hours of our sorrow, the clear doctrine avails so little, how small must have been the comfort which the believing Israelite could attain in the presence of the dead! Martha's words have now lost the hope which the sight of Jesus had awakened: the present sorrow seems to admit of no relief. This moment of greatest need Jesus chooses for the greatest revelation of Himself. When all else has been seen to fail He will comfort.

Vers. 25, 26. Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he have died, yet shall he live; And every one that liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? The emphasis falls on the first two words, 'I, 'am.' Martha's first expression of faith and hope had shown how imperfectly she knew Jesus Himself: to Himself alone His words now point. Her later words dwell on the resurrection in the remote future: Jesus says, 'I AM the resurrection and the life.' Alike in the future and in the present, life is unchangeably in Him (chap. i. 4),—and that the life which triumphs over death ('resurrection'), the life by which death is excluded and annulled. In other passages we read of Jesus as the Life, here only as the Resurrection: the latter thought is in truth contained in the former, and needs not distinct expression save in the presence of the apparent victory of death. It is possible that the meaning of our Lord's words is that He is the resurrection and the life which follows the resurrection,—in Him His people rise again, and, having risen, live for ever; but it is far more probable that this is only one part of the meaning. Because He is the Life, in the highest and absolute sense of this word, therefore He is the resurrection. He that believes in Him becomes one with Him: every one, therefore, that believes in Him possesses this victorious life. If he has died, yet life is his: if he still lives among men, this earthly life is but an emblem and a part of that all-embracing life which shall endure for ever in union with the Lord of life. In all this the law which limits man's life on earth is not forgotten, but a revelation is given to man which changes the meaning of death. As Godet beautifully says: 'Every believer is in reality and for ever sheltered from death. To die in full light, in the serene brightness of the life which is in Jesus, and to continue to live in Him, is no longer that which human language designates by the name of death. It is as if Jesus said: In me he who is dead is sure of life, and he who lives is sure never to die.' The original, indeed, is much more expressive than we can well bring out in English, 'Shall never unto eternity die.' To the question, 'Believest thou this?' Martha answers (and the form of her answer is characteristic):—

Ver. 27. She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I have believed that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, he that cometh into the world. The substitution of 'I have believed' for 'I believe' is striking. It seems to imply that she goes back on her previous belief,—securely founded, never shaken,—in which she knows that all He requires must be contained. His last words have been in some measure new and unfamiliar, and in her present state of mind she is incapable of comparing the old and the new. But that which she has believed and still believes contains the fullest recognition of her Lord. She has received Him as the fulfilment of Messianic hope, the revelation of the Divine to man, the long-expected Redeemer of the world.

Ver. 28. And when she had so said, she went away, and called Mary her sister, saying secretly, The Teacher is come, and calleth thee. We cannot doubt that Mary until now had been in ignorance of the coming of Jesus, or that it was at His bidding that Martha told her sister secretly of His call for her. That which He was about to do



He would have faith, not unbelief, to see; therefore Mary must be called 'secretly.'

Ver. 29. **And she, when she heard it, arose quickly, and went unto him.** Mark the characteristic touch in the words 'arose quickly' (comp. ver. 20). 'Went unto,' *i.e.*, started on her way, for it is in ver. 32 that the actual coming is spoken of.

Ver. 30. **Now Jesus was not yet come into the village, but was still in that place where Martha met him.** Avoiding the presence of 'the Jews,' so painful and incongruous at such a time. This verse is purely parenthetical.

Ver. 31. **The Jews, therefore, which were with her in the house, and were comforting her, when they saw Mary, that she rose up quickly and went out, followed her, supposing that she went unto the tomb to lament there.** The movements of her sister had suggested no such thought; but as soon as Mary rose and went out, only one explanation seemed possible. She sought to go alone, but, according to the custom of the

East, the friends who were with her attend her to the tomb to join in her lamentation over the dead. That they will meet Jesus has apparently not entered into their thought.

Ver. 32. **Mary, therefore, when she came where Jesus was, seeing him fall at his feet, saying unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died.** Her first words are nearly the same as her sister's: there is only in the Greek a slight difference in the place of 'my' which gives a touching emphasis to the expression of personal loss. Often may the sisters have repeated such words during their hours of anguish, when their brother was sinking before their eyes. Mary's absorbing grief makes other words impossible: she falls at the feet of Jesus weeping.

Ver. 33. **When Jesus therefore saw her lamenting, and the Jews lamenting which came with her, he was moved with indignation in his spirit, and troubled himself.** There is little doubt that the first word describing the emotion



Women Weeping at a Grave.

of Jesus denotes rather anger than sorrow. Such is its regular meaning; and, though New Testament usage partly gives a different turn to the word, yet in every passage it implies a severity of tone and feeling that is very different from grief. In Mark xiv. 5 it expresses indignation at what appeared reckless waste, and in Matt. ix. 30 and Mark i. 43 it denotes stern dealing, a severity that marked the giving of the charge; while in the Septuagint the noun derived from the verb is used to translate the Hebrew noun signifying indignation or anger. The only other passage in the New Testament in which we find the word is ver. 38 of this chapter. That we are to understand it as implying anger seems thus to be clear, and we are strengthened in this conclusion by the fact that the early Greek fathers take it in this sense. It is more difficult to answer the question, At what was Jesus angry? It has been replied—(1) at Himself, because He was moved to a sympathy and compassion *which it was needful to restrain*. In this case the words 'His spirit' are supposed

to be directly governed by the verb—'was indignant at His spirit.' But such a use of 'spirit' is surely impossible, while the explanation as a whole does violence to those conceptions of the humanity of our Lord which this very Gospel teaches us to form;—(2) at the unbelief and hypocritical weeping of 'the Jews.' But many of them were to believe (ver. 45); and there is nothing to indicate that their weeping was not genuine. Besides this, the emotion of Jesus is traced to the lamenting of Mary not less than to that of the Jews; and the whole narrative gains immeasurably in force if we suppose the latter to have been as sincere as the former;—(3) at the misery brought into the world by sin. This explanation appears upon the whole to be the most probable. As to the words 'in His spirit,' without entering into any discussion of a difficult subject, we may say that, as 'the spirit' denotes the highest (and so to speak) innermost part of man's nature, the language shows that our Lord's nature was stirred to its very depth. This reference to the spirit assists us

in understanding the words that follow 'and troubled Himself': the indignation and horror of the spirit threw the whole 'self' into disturbance. The meaning of chap. xiii. 21, where a similar expression occurs, is substantially the same: there we read that, at the thought of the presence of sin, of such evil as was about to show itself in His betrayal by Judas, Jesus was 'troubled' (that is, agitated, disturbed) 'in His spirit.'

Vers. 34, 35. And he said, Where have ye laid him? They say unto him, Lord, come and see. Jesus wept. The question is addressed to the sisters, and 'the Jews' give place to them in thought, for it is in sympathy with the bitter anguish of those whom He loves (well though He knows that He is about to assuage their grief) that the tears of Jesus are shed. The word differs from that used in vers. 31, 33, where the meaning is not calm weeping, but lamentation and wailing.

Vers. 36, 37. The Jews therefore said, Behold how he loved him! But some of them said, Could not this man, which opened the eyes of him that was blind, have caused that this man also should not die? Again there is a division amongst the Jews. Many recognise the naturalness of His tears, as a proof of His love for the departed. But some (in no spirit of simple wonder and perplexity, but in unfriendliness) ask why He had not prevented the calamity over which He is mourning. They may mean, As He gave sight to the blind man, could He not, if He had really wished, have stayed the power of the fatal disease? But it is also possible that they merely assume the former miracle for the purpose of invalidating it: If He really did give sight, why could He not heal the sickness? To heal diseases was to them a less wonderful act than to give sight to one born blind. We are compelled to assume an unfriendly spirit of the second question, partly because of John's use of the term 'the Jews,' partly from the analogy of many other passages in which He records the opposing comments of different sections of the party: the sequel also (vers. 45, 46) seems naturally to suggest such a division. The recurrence (in ver. 38) of the word discussed above (ver. 33) is thus very easily explained.

Ver. 38. Jesus therefore again moved with indignation in himself cometh to the tomb. Now it was a cave, and a stone lay against it. The indignation was again excited either by the malicious comment just made by some of the Jews, or by the renewed recollection of the power of evil in the world. Like Jewish tombs in general, this was a natural cave or, more probably, a vault artificially excavated in the limestone rock. The entrance was closed by a stone, which lay against it (or possibly upon it). This verse again furnishes an indication that the family was not poor.

Ver. 39. Jesus saith, Take ye away the stone. The sister of him that was dead, Martha, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been four days here. No expectation of some great blessing which God will give in answer to the prayer of Jesus (ver. 22) is now in Martha's mind. She cannot understand the removal of the stone. To her, as the (elder) sister, the right of expostulation belonged; and it is in the simplest and most direct terms that she urges that the dead may not be exposed to the living. Nothing could more vividly illustrate the power which at this moment death wielded alike over the body of the departed and his sister's spirit. It is probably to

bring out this power in the most forcible manner possible that not only is Martha described as 'the sister of him that was dead,' but that the description precedes her name. How differently does the Evangelist himself feel! It is instructive to observe that in the words 'him that was dead' he changes the term for death, using not that of ver. 26, but another which expresses simply coming to the end of life.

Ver. 40. Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou believedst, thou shouldst see the glory of God? Martha would have prevented the removal of the stone; but this wish was but a symbol of a real hindrance in the Saviour's way,—her decline in faith. She has for the time come completely under the influence of 'the things seen': the reality of her loss is too much for her, and she cannot join the words of Jesus in vers. 25, 26 with His present actions. In saying 'believe' he recalls those words of His to her thought; and not those words only, but also His first saying (ver. 4), that the sickness was 'not unto death, but for the glory of God.'

Vers. 41, 42. They took away the stone therefore. And Jesus lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou heardest me. And I myself knew that thou hearest me always; but because of the multitude which standeth around I said it, that they may believe that thou didst send me. The words are not a prayer, but a thanksgiving for prayer answered. What He is about to do is given by the Father in answer to His prayer. But had Jesus said no more than this, though the miracle would have ministered to 'the glory of God' (ver. 4), yet even this purpose would have been attained in an inferior degree: the Father receives true glory when Jesus is acknowledged, not merely as a Prophet, whose prayer is heard, but as the Son of God. To His thanksgiving Jesus adds words which implicitly declare the whole relation of the Father to the Son. The hearing of prayer for which He has given thanks is no isolated act, but is one manifestation of an unceasing communion. Whilst uttering the words of prayer or of thanksgiving, He knew that the Father heard Him *always*: the words were spoken for the sake of the multitude, that they might believe the truth of His mission. Had they witnessed the miracle unaccompanied by this appeal to His Father, they might well have glorified God who had given such power unto men, and acknowledged that as a wonder-working Prophet Jesus was sent and empowered by God. But if the power of God is manifested now, when this solemn claim is made of constant communion with God, with God as 'Father,' the seal of the Father is set upon Him as the Son and the Sent of God. The word 'multitude' is remarkable. It cannot signify number only and refer to 'the Jews' before spoken of. John always employs this word in another sense, and indeed in marked distinction from the ruling class, 'the Jews.' It is clear then that many were now present,—persons who had accompanied Jesus from Perea and friends and neighbours of the family of Bethany.

Vers. 43, 44. And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth; and he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with gravebands: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go. The words 'bound hand and foot' perhaps convey a wrong



impression : as the more literal meaning is 'his hands and his feet bound with gravebands,' it is very possible that the limbs were separately bound, so that, life having returned, free movement was permitted to them. The miracle wrought, the Evangelist adds nothing concerning Lazarus or

his sisters. It is Jesus Himself who is the centre of the scene, who has shown Himself the Resurrection and the Life. Even the impression which this most wonderful of miracles produces is recorded only in its relation to Jesus and to belief in Him.

## CHAPTER XI. 45-57.

### *The effect of the raising of Lazarus.*

- 45 **T**HEN many<sup>1</sup> of the <sup>a</sup> Jews which<sup>2</sup> came to Mary, and had<sup>3</sup> seen<sup>4</sup> the things which Jesus did, believed on<sup>5</sup> him. <sup>a</sup> Ver. 19.
- 46 <sup>b</sup> But some of them went their ways<sup>6</sup> to the Pharisees, and told<sup>7</sup> them what things Jesus had done. <sup>b</sup> See ver. 42. Comp. chap. v. 15.
- 47 <sup>c</sup> Then gathered the chief priests and the Pharisees<sup>8</sup> a council, and said, <sup>d</sup> 'What do we? for this man doeth many miracles.'<sup>9</sup> <sup>c</sup> Matt. xxvi. 3-7. <sup>d</sup> Chap. xii. 19.
- 48 If we let him thus alone, <sup>e</sup> all *men* will believe on<sup>10</sup> him : and the Romans shall<sup>11</sup> come and take away both our place and<sup>12</sup> nation. <sup>e</sup> Comp. ver. 50, chap. vii. 4, 35, xii. 19, 32.
- 49 And<sup>13</sup> one of them, *named* Caiaphas, being the<sup>14</sup> high priest<sup>15</sup> that same year,<sup>16</sup> said unto them, Ye know nothing at<sup>17</sup> all, Nor consider that it is expedient for us,<sup>18</sup> that <sup>f</sup> one man should die for the people, and that<sup>19</sup> the whole nation perish<sup>20</sup> not. <sup>f</sup> Ver. 51, chap. xviii. 13.
- 50 And<sup>21</sup> this spake he not of himself : but being high priest that<sup>22</sup> year, he <sup>g</sup> prophesied that Jesus should<sup>23</sup> die for<sup>24</sup> that<sup>25</sup> nation ; And not for that<sup>26</sup> nation only, but that also <sup>h</sup> he should gather together in one<sup>27</sup> the <sup>i</sup> children of God that<sup>28</sup> were<sup>29</sup> scattered abroad. Then from that day forth they took counsel together<sup>30</sup> for to put<sup>31</sup> him to death. <sup>g</sup> Comp. chap. xviii. 14. <sup>h</sup> Comp. Ex. xxviii. 30 ; Num. xxvii. 21. <sup>i</sup> Chap. vii. 35, x. 16, xvii. 20. <sup>j</sup> Chap. i. 12, xx. 17 ; Rom. viii. 15 ; Gal. iii. 26 ; 1 John iii. 1. <sup>k</sup> Comp. chap. x. 40.
- 51 Jesus therefore <sup>l</sup> walked no more openly among the Jews ; but went<sup>32</sup> thence unto a country<sup>33</sup> near to the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim, and there continued<sup>34</sup> with his<sup>35</sup> disciples. And the<sup>36</sup> Jews' passover<sup>37</sup> was nigh at hand : and many went out of the country up to Jerusalem<sup>38</sup> before the<sup>39</sup> passover, to <sup>m</sup> purify themselves. Then <sup>n</sup> sought they<sup>40</sup> for Jesus, and spake among themselves, as they stood in the temple,<sup>41</sup> What think ye, that he will not come to the feast ? <sup>m</sup> Chap. xii. 1. <sup>n</sup> Comp. Acts xxi. 24 ; 2 Chron. xxx. 17, 28. <sup>o</sup> Chap. vii. 11. <sup>p</sup> Comp. ver. 53.
- 52 Now both<sup>42</sup> the chief priests and the Pharisees had<sup>43</sup> given a commandment,<sup>44</sup> that, if any man knew where he were, he should shew it, that they might take<sup>45</sup> him.

- |   |   |                         |                            |                        |
|---|---|-------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|
| <sup>1</sup> Many therefore   | <sup>2</sup> they which                               | <sup>3</sup> and beheld | <sup>4</sup> in            | <sup>5</sup> went away |
| <sup>6</sup> The chief priests and the Pharisees therefore gathered | <sup>7</sup> will                                     | <sup>8</sup> add our    | <sup>9</sup> But a certain | <sup>10</sup> omit the |
| <sup>11</sup> of that year  | <sup>12</sup> profitable for you                      | <sup>13</sup> omit that | <sup>14</sup> But          |                        |
| <sup>15</sup> of that   | <sup>16</sup> was about to                            | <sup>17</sup> the       |                            |                        |
| <sup>18</sup> but that he might also gather together into one       |   |                         | <sup>19</sup> are          |                        |
| <sup>20</sup> From that day forth therefore they took counsel       | <sup>21</sup> that they might put                     |                         |                            |                        |
| <sup>22</sup> add away  | <sup>23</sup> into the country                        | <sup>24</sup> abode     | <sup>25</sup> the          |                        |
| <sup>26</sup> passover of the Jews                                  | <sup>27</sup> went up to Jerusalem out of the country |                         |                            |                        |
| <sup>28</sup> They sought therefore                                 | <sup>29</sup> temple-courts                           | <sup>30</sup> omit both |                            |                        |
| <sup>31</sup> commandments  | <sup>32</sup> seize                                   |                         |                            |                        |

CONTENTS. The most striking of all the miracles of Jesus has been performed, and His manifestation of Himself to the world has ended. The effect is proportionate. On the one hand, faith is awakened in the hearts of 'many' of His most determined enemies 'the Jews.' On the other hand, final measures are taken to seize and kill Him. Jesus retires to a city near the wilderness along with His disciples. It is the pause before the last journey to Jerusalem, to which He is to go as the Paschal Lamb selected for the true Paschal sacrifice and feast. The subordinate parts are—(1) vers. 45, 46; (2) vers. 47-53; (3) vers. 54-57.

Ver. 45. Many therefore of the Jews, they which came to Mary, and beheld the things which Jesus did, believed in him. The statement is very remarkable, but the language of the original is so clear as to leave no doubt as to the meaning. The great manifestations of our Lord to the people, whether in word or in miracle, were usually, as we have several times seen, followed by a marked division of opinion and feeling among His hearers. There is such a division in the present instance, as the next verse shows; but the effect of the miracle is great beyond precedent, for *all* those of 'the Jews' who had come to the house of Mary (ver. 19), and who with her witnessed the actions of Jesus, became believers in Him.

Ver. 46. But some of them went away to the Pharisees, and told them what things Jesus had done. It is impossible, we think, that what is here related can have been done with friendly motives, or from a mere sense of duty to men whose office made them spiritual guides of the people. The analogy of many passages in which John similarly records diverging opinions makes it plain that the giving of this information to the Pharisees was an act of hostility to Jesus. If so, the word 'them' at the beginning of the verse must refer to 'the Jews' in general, not to those who are described in the preceding verse. Some of 'the Jews' may have been found amongst the multitude which, as we know, stood round (ver. 42), having no connection with the mourning of the sisters, and therefore not included in the description of ver. 45. At this period of our Lord's history the Pharisees have as a body declared against Him; to this large and powerful sect, therefore, the news of the event is brought.

Ver. 47. The chief priests and the Pharisees therefore gathered a council, and said, What do we? for this man doeth many signs. Here, probably for the first time in this Gospel, we read of a meeting of the Sanhedrin,—not a formal meeting, but one hastily summoned in the sudden emergency that had arisen. (See the note on chap. vii. 32.) The question 'What do we?' is not so much deliberative (*What are we to do?*) as reproachful of themselves, *What are we doing?* This man (a designation of dislike or contempt) is working many miracles and we do nothing,—take no steps to prevent the evil that must follow! The Evangelist is careful to preserve their testimony against themselves; in the moment of their rage they acknowledge the 'many signs' of Jesus, and confess themselves without excuse.

Ver. 48. If we let him thus alone, all men will believe in him: and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation. The fear was natural. It is true that they were already subject to the Roman power. But, with

their usual policy towards tributary states, the Romans had left them their worship, temple, and religious administration, untouched. If Jesus (whom they *will* not recognise in His religious claims) shall be owned as Messiah, and popular tumult shall ensue, all these privileges will be taken away from them. Their fear therefore is real; their guilt lay not in a hypocritical pretence of alarm, but in their wilful blindness to the truth. There can be no doubt whatever that their words are quoted by the Evangelist as an unconscious prophecy (comp. chap. vii. 35, xii. 19, xix. 19, and below, ver. 50), or rather as a prophecy to be fulfilled in that irony of events which shall bring on them in their unbelief the very calamities they feared, while faith would have secured for them the contrasted blessings. Because the Jewish people did not believe in Jesus but rejected Him, the Romans did take away both their 'place and nation': had they believed they would have been established for ever in the spiritual kingdom of the Messiah.

Vers. 49, 50. But a certain one of them, named Caiaphas, being high priest of that year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, nor consider that it is profitable for you that one man should die for the people, and the whole nation perish not. Caiaphas was a Sadducee, a powerful and crafty man. He was high priest for about eighteen years (A.D. 18-36), but is here spoken of by the Evangelist (as in chap. xviii. 13) as being 'high priest of that year.' This remarkable expression has no reference to the high priest's precarious tenure of office in those times (as many as 25 high priests are enumerated in the century preceding the destruction of Jerusalem); nor is there the smallest pretence for attributing to the Evangelist a historical mistake (such as a belief that the office was annual!). The simple meaning is that Caiaphas was high priest in that memorable year, in which the true sacrifice for the sins of the people was offered, by that death of which the high priest unconsciously prophesied, and in causing which moreover he was in great measure the instrument. The first words spoken by Caiaphas are in their brusque haughtiness characteristic of the sect to which he belonged. His whole address to the Pharisees is marked by heartless selfishness. 'If we let him alone we shall be brought to ruin,' the Pharisees had said: 'Save yourselves and let Him perish,' is the uncompromising answer of this high priest. He seems to use two very different words in the same sense: '*people*' was the name of Israel in its theocratic aspect, '*nation*' (the word the Pharisees had used) was a term common to Israel with all other peoples of the world. '*People*' is a name which the Sanhedrists would use in reference to their own rule; '*nation*' is that which the Romans would attack and destroy. The further significance of his language will afterwards appear (see note on the next verse). Unscrupulous and utterly unjust as this counsel was, it was politic and crafty. It will commend them to the Romans if they can show themselves willing to destroy any one of whom it may be even pretended that he seeks to disturb their rule.

Vers. 51, 52. But this spake he not of himself: but being high priest of that year, he prophesied that Jesus was about to die for the nation, and not for the nation only, but that he might also gather together into one the children of God that are scattered abroad. The words are a

prophecy: heartless and unscrupulous in meaning and intention, they are so contrived as to express profound and blessed truth. In the earlier days of the nation a prophetic spirit was ever believed to rest upon the high priest (comp. Ex. xxviii. 30, Num. xxvii. 21, Hosea iii. 4). When the office became degraded, and the high priest the servant of ambition and covetousness, prophetic guidance was no longer sought from him; but, as in the Old Testament we read of false prophets who in spite of themselves were compelled to be the medium of proclaiming God's will, so is it here. We see now the significance of the words 'people' and 'nation.' He prophesied that Jesus should die for the nation,—i.e., for the Jews, henceforth but one of the nations of the world, ranked with the Gentiles whom they scorned. The object of this death should also be, 'that He might gather into one the children of God that are scattered abroad.' This latter prophecy is found by the Evangelist in the word 'people' of ver. 50, 'that one man should die for the *people*.' No longer does this name belong to Jews alone. The sacrifice is offered in behalf of all the children of God, all to whom the Father offers sonship, gathered henceforth into one under the new name of 'the people' of God. Compare the striking parallels in chap. vii. 35, x. 16, xvii. 20.

Ver. 53. From that day forth, therefore, they took counsel that they might put him to death. Not that they might pass sentence of death upon him; that is done: but that they might execute the sentence. Their previous efforts of rage against Jesus had been connected with moments of special excitement; henceforward they are deliberate, determined, constant. The cup of iniquity of 'the Jews' is full.

Ver. 54. Jesus therefore walked no more openly among the Jews; but went away thence into the country near to the wilderness, into a city called Ephraim, and there abode with the disciples. The time of 'free speech' (see note on chap. vii. 4) was at an end: from this time Jesus avoided communication with 'the Jews,' no longer vouchsafing to them the word which they heard only to reject. The place to which He withdrew afforded a deeper solitude than that sought by Him a little while before (chap. x. 40). The crisis in His life is graver; the retirement which he seeks is more profound. There is no mention now (as in chap. x. 41) of many who resorted unto Him: the town to which He retired is described as 'near to the wilderness.' Ephraim, possibly the same as Ophrah (1 Sam. xiii. 17), is commonly identified with el-Taiyibeh, a village 16 miles from Jerusalem and 4 or 5 east of Bethel, situated on a hill which commands the valley of the Jordan.

The wilderness will be 'the wild uncultivated hill country north-east of Jerusalem, lying between the central towns and the Jordan valley' (*Dict. of Bible*, i. 569. See also Stanley, *Sinai and Palestine*, pp. 214, 419).

Ver. 55. And the passover of the Jews was nigh at hand. On these words see the notes on chap. ii. 13, vi. 4. No one who has followed the narrative of this Gospel with care up to the present point can doubt that the expression is used with deep, indeed with terrible significance.—And many went up to Jerusalem out of the country before the passover, to purify themselves. It does not appear that there was any special injunction with regard to purification before the Passover; for such passages as Num. ix. 6-11, 2 Chron. xxx. 17-20, would rather indicate that from the peculiar importance of this feast it was to be observed even where the purification required before all great events could not be obtained. There can be no doubt, however, that it fell under the general law of purification, and that defiled persons did not feel themselves qualified to partake of the Passover (comp. chap. xviii. 28). These strangers from the country, therefore, assembled in Jerusalem several days before the festival, that in the holy city they might seek the preparation that was requisite.

Ver. 56. They sought therefore for Jesus, and spake among themselves, as they stood in the temple-courts, What think ye, that he will not come to the feast? The language is that of earnest and interested inquiry. Those who are talking together are friendly to Jesus, and hopeful and expectant that He will appear at the festival. The groups assemble in the temple-courts, where many of them may have come to bring offerings for purification (ver. 55), and where Jesus had been wont to teach. The word 'therefore' at the beginning of this verse seems to point to the privacy into which Jesus had retired (ver. 54). These pilgrims came to Jerusalem, hoping to meet with Jesus, but they saw Him not: they sought Him therefore, etc. (comp. chap. vii. 11).

Ver. 57. Now the chief priests and the Pharisees had given commandments, that if any man knew where he were, he should shew it that they might seize him. As the last verse has described the eager interest of the friends of Jesus, this verse presents a picture of His enemies. In pursuance of the resolve related above (ver. 53) commandments had been issued—the plural seems to point to orders sent to all parts of the land—that all the faithful should aid the rulers in apprehending Jesus. These latter verses show us the friends and the foes of Jesus alike occupying the field in preparation for the end.

## CHAPTER XII. 1-36.

### *Homage to Jesus, who in Death triumphs over Death.*

1 **T**HEN Jesus<sup>1</sup> six days before the "passover came to a Lev. xiii. 2. Bethany, where Lazarus was which had been dead,"

<sup>1</sup> Jesus therefore

<sup>2</sup> omit which had been dead

- 2 whom <sup>b</sup> he raised <sup>a</sup> from the dead. <sup>c</sup> There <sup>d</sup> they made him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that  
 3 sat at the table with him. Then took Mary <sup>b</sup> a pound of ointment of <sup>d</sup> spikenard, very costly, <sup>e</sup> and <sup>d</sup> anointed the feet of Jesus, and <sup>f</sup> <sup>e</sup> wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled  
 4 with the odour of the ointment. Then saith one of his disciples,  
 5 Judas Iscariot, Simon's *son*, which should betray him, <sup>g</sup> Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given  
 6 to the poor? This <sup>h</sup> he said, not that <sup>i</sup> he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and <sup>j</sup> had <sup>i</sup> the <sup>k</sup> bag, and <sup>l</sup> <sup>k</sup> bare <sup>l</sup> <sup>m</sup> what was put therein. Then said Jesus, <sup>n</sup> Let her alone: <sup>o</sup> against the day of my burying hath she kept this. <sup>p</sup> For <sup>q</sup> the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always.  
 9 Much people <sup>r</sup> of the Jews therefore knew <sup>s</sup> that he was there: and they came not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might  
 10 see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the dead. But the chief priests consulted that they might put Lazarus also to  
 11 death; Because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away, and believed on <sup>t</sup> Jesus.  
 12 On <sup>u</sup> the next day much people <sup>v</sup> that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem,  
 13 <sup>w</sup> Took <sup>x</sup> branches of <sup>y</sup> palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, <sup>z</sup> Hosanna: Blessed <sup>aa</sup> is the <sup>ab</sup> King of Israel  
 14 that cometh in the name of the Lord. <sup>ac</sup> And Jesus, <sup>ad</sup> when he had found a young ass, sat thereon; as it is written, <sup>ae</sup> Fear not, daughter of Zion: behold, thy King cometh, sitting on an ass's  
 16 colt. <sup>af</sup> These things understood not his disciples at the first: but when Jesus was <sup>ag</sup> glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and <sup>ah</sup> that they had done <sup>ai</sup> these  
 17 things unto him. The people <sup>aj</sup> therefore that was with him when he called Lazarus out of his grave, <sup>ak</sup> and raised him from  
 18 the dead, bare record. <sup>al</sup> For this cause <sup>am</sup> the people also met him, <sup>an</sup> for that they <sup>ao</sup> heard that he had done this miracle. <sup>ap</sup>  
 19 The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Perceive ye how ye <sup>aq</sup> prevail nothing? behold, <sup>ar</sup> the world is gone <sup>as</sup> after him.

<sup>a</sup> whom Jesus had raised<sup>d</sup> add therefore<sup>g</sup> Mary therefore took<sup>b</sup> precious<sup>f</sup> add she<sup>h</sup> But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples, he that was about to betray him, saith<sup>i</sup> But this<sup>j</sup> because<sup>k</sup> having<sup>l</sup> omit and<sup>m</sup> bare away<sup>n</sup> Jesus therefore said<sup>o</sup> that for the day of the preparation for my burial she may keep it<sup>p</sup> The common people<sup>q</sup> learned<sup>r</sup> in <sup>s</sup> omit On<sup>t</sup> the common people<sup>u</sup> add the<sup>v</sup> and they cried out<sup>w</sup> Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord, and, The King of Israel<sup>x</sup> did <sup>y</sup> multitude<sup>z</sup> out of the tomb<sup>aa</sup> witness <sup>ab</sup> add also<sup>ac</sup> the multitude went to meet him<sup>ad</sup> because they<sup>ae</sup> sign<sup>af</sup> Behold how that ye<sup>ag</sup> lo<sup>ah</sup> add away

<sup>b</sup> Chap. xi. 43, 44.  
<sup>c</sup> Matt. xxvi. 6-11; Mark xiv. 3-8.  
<sup>d</sup> Mark xiv. 3. Comp. Cant. i. 12, iv. 13, 14.  
<sup>e</sup> Comp. Luke vii. 38, 44.

<sup>f</sup> Comp. chap. xiii. 29.  
<sup>g</sup> 2 Chron. xxiv. 8, 10, 11.  
<sup>h</sup> Chap. x. 31, xvi. 12, xix. 17, xx. 15.  
<sup>i</sup> Deut. xv. 11.

<sup>j</sup> Matt. xxi. 4-9; Mark xi. 7-10; Luke xix. 35-38.  
<sup>k</sup> Comp. Rev. vii. 9.  
<sup>l</sup> Ps. cxviii. 26.  
<sup>m</sup> See chap. i. 49.  
<sup>n</sup> Comp. Matt. xxi. 2; Mark xi. 1; Luke xix. 30.  
<sup>o</sup> Zech. ix. 9.  
<sup>p</sup> Chap. ii. 22.  
<sup>q</sup> Comp. xiv. 26, xvi. 25.  
<sup>r</sup> Ver. 23, chap. vii. 39, xiii. 31, 32, xvii. 1, 5.  
<sup>s</sup> Comp. chap. xi. 4.

20 <sup>r</sup> And there were certain <sup>35</sup> Greeks <sup>36</sup> among them that came <sup>r</sup> Chap. vii.  
 21 up to worship at the feast: The same <sup>37</sup> came therefore to <sup>35, x. 16.</sup>  
<sup>r</sup> Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired <sup>38</sup> him, <sup>r</sup> Chap. i. 44  
 22 saying, Sir, we would see Jesus. Philip cometh and telleth  
 23 <sup>r</sup> Andrew: and again <sup>39</sup> Andrew <sup>40</sup> and Philip <sup>41</sup> tell Jesus. And  
 Jesus answered <sup>42</sup> them, saying, <sup>r</sup> The hour is come, that the Son <sup>r</sup> See chap.  
 24 of man should be <sup>r</sup> glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, <sup>ii. 4.</sup>  
<sup>r</sup> Except a <sup>43</sup> corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it <sup>r</sup> 1 Cor. xv.  
 abideth <sup>44</sup> alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. <sup>36.</sup>  
 25 <sup>r</sup> He that loveth his life <sup>45</sup> shall lose <sup>46</sup> it; and he that hateth his <sup>r</sup> Matt. x. 39;  
 26 life <sup>47</sup> in this world shall keep it unto <sup>r</sup> life eternal. If any man <sup>r</sup> Luke xvii.  
 serve me, let him <sup>r</sup> follow me; and <sup>r</sup> where I am, there shall <sup>33.</sup>  
 also my servant be: if any man <sup>47</sup> serve me, him will <sup>r</sup> my <sup>48</sup> <sup>r</sup> See chap.  
 27 Father honour. Now is my soul <sup>r</sup> troubled; and what shall I <sup>iii. 14.</sup>  
 say? <sup>r</sup> Father, save me from <sup>49</sup> this hour: but for this cause came <sup>r</sup> See chap.  
 28 I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name. Then came there <sup>viii. 12.</sup>  
 a voice from <sup>51</sup> heaven, <sup>r</sup> saying, I have both glorified <sup>r</sup> it, and will <sup>r</sup> Chap. xiv. 3.  
 29 glorify <sup>r</sup> it again. The people <sup>52</sup> therefore, that stood by, and <sup>xvii. 24.</sup>  
 heard <sup>r</sup> it, said that it thundered: <sup>53</sup> others said, An angel spake <sup>r</sup> Chap. xi. 33,  
 30 to him. Jesus answered and said, <sup>r</sup> This voice came not because <sup>xiii. 21.</sup>  
 31 of me, <sup>54</sup> but for your sakes. <sup>r</sup> Now is the <sup>55</sup> judgment of this <sup>r</sup> Comp. Matt.  
 32 world: now shall the <sup>r</sup> prince of this world be cast out. And <sup>iv. 9; Eph.</sup>  
 I, if I be <sup>r</sup> lifted up from <sup>57</sup> the earth, will draw all <sup>r</sup> men unto <sup>ii. 2.</sup>  
 33 me. <sup>58</sup> This <sup>59</sup> he said, <sup>r</sup> signifying what <sup>60</sup> death he should die. <sup>r</sup> See chap.  
 34 The people <sup>61</sup> answered him, We have heard out of the <sup>r</sup> law <sup>viii. 28.</sup>  
 that Christ <sup>62</sup> abideth for ever: and how sayest thou, The Son <sup>r</sup> Chap. xviii.  
 35 of man must be lifted up? <sup>63</sup> who is this Son of man? Then <sup>32, xxi. 19.</sup>  
 Jesus <sup>64</sup> said unto them, <sup>r</sup> Yet a little while is <sup>r</sup> the light with <sup>r</sup> Chap. x. 34.  
 you. Walk while <sup>65</sup> ye have the light, lest <sup>67</sup> darkness <sup>r</sup> come  
 upon you: <sup>66</sup> for <sup>69</sup> he that walketh in darkness <sup>70</sup> knoweth not  
 36 whither he goeth. While ye have light, <sup>71</sup> believe in the light,  
 that ye may be the <sup>r</sup> children of light. <sup>72</sup> These things spake  
 Jesus, and departed, <sup>73</sup> and <sup>r</sup> did hide himself <sup>74</sup> from them.

<sup>55</sup> some	<sup>56</sup> add from	<sup>57</sup> These	<sup>58</sup> asked
<sup>59</sup> omit and again	<sup>40</sup> add cometh	<sup>41</sup> add and they	<sup>42</sup> answereth
<sup>43</sup> the	<sup>44</sup> add itself	<sup>45</sup> soul	<sup>46</sup> loseth
<sup>47</sup> one	<sup>48</sup> the	<sup>49</sup> out of	
<sup>60</sup> There came therefore	<sup>51</sup> out of	<sup>52</sup> multitude	<sup>53</sup> had thundered
<sup>54</sup> hath spoken	<sup>55</sup> Not for my sake	<sup>56</sup> hath this voice come	<sup>57</sup> there
<sup>58</sup> lifted on high out of	<sup>59</sup> myself	<sup>60</sup> But this	<sup>61</sup> by what manner of
<sup>61</sup> multitude therefore	<sup>62</sup> the Christ	<sup>63</sup> lifted on high	
<sup>64</sup> Jesus therefore	<sup>65</sup> among	<sup>66</sup> as	<sup>67</sup> that
<sup>68</sup> overtake you not	<sup>69</sup> and	<sup>70</sup> the darkness	
<sup>71</sup> As ye have the light		<sup>72</sup> that ye may become sons of light	
<sup>73</sup> and went away		<sup>74</sup> and was hidden	

CONTENTS. Jesus has been doomed to death (xi. 53, 57), and the hour is at hand when He shall be seized, and the sentence executed. But the malice of man cannot interfere with the purposes

of God. In the midst of dangers, under sentence of death, the Redeemer pursues His path of glory. Three pictures illustrating this are presented in the section of the twelfth chapter now before us. The

subordinate parts of this section are—(1) vers. 1-11, the anointing in Bethany; (2) vers. 12-19, the triumphal entry into Jerusalem; (3) vers. 20-36, the homage of the Greeks to Jesus.

Ver. 1. Jesus therefore, six days before the passover, came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. The word *therefore* marks a close connection with the preceding chapter, not however with its concluding words. The 56th and 57th verses of chap. xi., describing how the thought of both friends and foes was intently fixed on Jesus and His possible presence at the festival, form a very natural introduction to the narrative of this chapter, but in strict historical sequence the verse before us connects itself with the general statement of chap. xi. 55. As to the particular date here spoken of there has been much difference of opinion, but it does not seem difficult to arrive at the most probable meaning. The point from which the Evangelist reckons is beyond doubt, we think, the 14th day of Nisan or Abib, the first month in the Jewish sacred year. 'In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the Lord's Passover' (Lev. xxiii. 5). On this fourteenth day, 'between the evenings' (Ex. xii. 6), that is (probably) between sunset and the time when darkness came on, the Paschal lamb was to be slain. With the evening of the fourteenth day however (using day in its ordinary sense) began according to Jewish reckoning the fifteenth day of the month, which, lasting until the following sunset, was the first of the seven days of unleavened bread. The Paschal meal, therefore, was eaten at the close of the fourteenth natural day, but at the beginning of the fifteenth day according to the computation of the Jews. Starting then from the 14th of Nisan, the 'six days' will most probably bring us to the 8th; and if, as is generally believed, the 15th of Nisan fell on Friday in this year, the 8th will coincide with the same day in the preceding week. The only doubt respecting the correctness of this view arises from a peculiarity sometimes found in Jewish notes of time,—both the first day and the last in an interval being included in the reckoning, so that 'six days before' might really mean 'the sixth day before,' that is 'five days before:' but as it is certain that the Jews themselves could speak of 'one day before the Passover' (using this very form of expression),—words to which only one meaning can possibly be given,—it seems perfectly certain that the reckoning in this verse must be taken in its exact and natural sense, as we have taken it above. It was therefore on the 8th of Nisan, at some part of the day which we should call the Friday before the Passover, that Jesus arrived in Bethany. This day, as we learn from Josephus, was often chosen by the bands of pilgrims for their arrival in Jerusalem: those referred to in chap. xi. 55 had come earlier than others to the holy city for a special reason. As the sabbath commenced on the evening of this day, we may most naturally assume that Jesus reached Bethany before sunset. In adding to the name of this place the words, 'where Lazarus was whom Jesus raised from the dead,' the Evangelist in part intends to prepare the way for the narrative that follows, but also seeks to connect his narrative with the wonderful record of chap. xi., and to place the glory of Jesus as the Prince and Giver of Life in contrast with the designs of His enemies to seize Him and put Him to death (chap. xi. 53).

Ver. 2. There therefore they made him a supper; and Martha served: but Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with him. Two points only are mentioned by John, that a feast was given in honour of Jesus, and that every member of the family so signally blessed was present. By whom, when, and where, the feast was given, are questions to which he returns no answer. Different conclusions may be drawn from the words of this verse; but they seem most naturally to imply that the entertainment was not given in the house or by the family of Lazarus. It is true that 'Martha served,' yet we may well suppose that, wherever the feast took place, this was an office she would claim; and the insertion of the clause relating to Lazarus is hardly to be accounted for if Jesus were a guest in his house. As to the question of time, ver. 12 seems to show that the evening of the feast must have been that following the sabbath rather than the evening with which the sabbath commenced. Between this verse therefore and ver. 1 we must interpose the rest of the sabbath. We are now at liberty to turn to the account of the Synoptists. Luke relates nothing (in connection with this period) that is similar to the narrative before us; but the other two Evangelists describe a supper and an anointing which manifestly are identical with what John records here. Some slight differences in detail will be called up as the narrative proceeds: the only serious question is one relating to time. In Matt. xxvi. 2 we are brought to a date two days before the Passover, whereas the feast in question is related in later verses (6-13). (Compare also the parallel section in Mark xiv.) But there is nothing whatever in Matthew's account to fix the time of the feast; and both the structure of his gospel and the apparent links of connection in this particular narrative are consistent with the view ordinarily taken, that at ver. 6 he goes back to relate an earlier event, which furnished occasion to Judas for furthering the design of the rulers, as recorded in the first verses of the chapter. If then there is no doubt of the identity of the events mentioned by the Synoptists and by John, we learn that the feast was given in the house of Simon the leper, a person of whom we know nothing more.

Ver. 3. Mary therefore took a pound of ointment of spikenard, very precious. By ointment we are to understand rather a liquid perfume than what we commonly know as ointment. The precise description of ointment or perfume that is here indicated is a question that has been much controverted. The words, which literally mean *ointment of nard* 'pistic,' are the same as those employed by Mark (chap. xiv. 3): in each place our English Version has 'spikenard,' a word suggested by the rendering of the Vulgate in Mark (*nardus spicatus*), and used by our translators in three passages of the Old Testament (Cant. i. 12, iv. 13, 14). In the passages last named the word that stands in the Hebrew text is *nērd*, evidently identical with the *nardos* used here by John: the word is said to be really of Persian origin, denoting a perfume brought from India by Persian traders. It will be seen that our translation has practically passed over the epithet 'pistic,' as to the meaning of which there exists the greatest uncertainty. By some it is explained as *potable* (the fine nard-oil being sometimes drunk); others refer the word to a root meaning to *press* or *pound*.

(the oil being obtained by pressure); whilst others maintain that the word is not descriptive of any species of nard, but denotes its *genuineness*. The most probable opinion is that *gistic* is a geographical term which was at the time familiarly associated with the name of the perfume as an article of commerce, though now the exact significance is lost. From the parallel narratives (Matt. xxvi. 7; Mark xiv. 3) we learn that, as a fluid, it was kept in a flask (for this is the truer rendering of the Greek word translated *alabaster box*) hermetically sealed; and the contents would be extracted by breaking off the neck. As the ointment was a fluid, and the neck of the flask was broken off, we seem entitled to infer that the whole was used. The quantity which Mary had bought was very large, for the 'pound' here spoken of was equivalent to about 12 ounces avoirdupois. Its preciousness is best illustrated by a later verse (ver. 5), where we find 300 denarii (in Mark xiv. 5, *more than 300 denarii*) mentioned as its probable value. If we take the denarius at 8½d., the value ordinarily assigned, this sum amounts to £10, 12s. 6d. The truer principle of calculation, however, is that the sum be estimated according to the power of purchase which it represents; and it would be easy to show that 300 denarii would ordinarily purchase a larger quantity of wheat (for example) than could now be obtained for £20 of our money. —And anointed the feet of Jesus, and she wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment. With this precious perfume, then, Mary anointed the feet of her Lord. The other Evangelists speak of 'the head' not 'the feet,' and of the ointment as poured down over the head. There is of course no discrepancy between the accounts. Both feet and head were anointed: John speaks of the former because the words which he is about to add refer to the feet alone; and though the other narratives mention no more than the anointing of the head, yet the words of Jesus related by both Evangelists speak of the ointment as poured upon His 'body,' and as designed to prepare Him for His burial. Perhaps, in a writer like John, who seizes so powerfully the symbolism (the real symbolism, not a possible subjective application) of the various events in his Master's life, we ought also to connect this anointing of the feet of Jesus (*twice* mentioned, here and in chap. xi. 2) with His washing of the disciples' feet to be related in the chapter which follows. Over against cleansing of their feet soiled by the day's travel is set the honour due to the very feet of Him to whom contact with earthly life brought not even a transient stain. Be this as it may, Mary's action as here described, her use of the most precious ointment, whose odour filled the whole house (a fact which is far more than a mere historical reminiscence), and the devotion of that which is a woman's chief ornament to the purpose of wiping the feet which she had anointed, picture to us most impressively her gratitude and humble reverence.

Ver. 4. But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples, he that was about to betray him, saith. After the picture of the highest loving homage to Him whom the Jewish rulers had adjudged to death, the Evangelist gives the contrasted view of an apostle, who, apostle as he was, would shortly be seeking to betray his Lord, and who showed the present workings of his heart by grudging the lavish expression of Mary's faith and love.

Ver. 5. Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor? Care for the poor is the mask which the murmuring protest of Judas wears. Thus sin, that it may the better extinguish the virtue by which at the moment it is offended, is wont to pay reverence to some other virtue,—some virtue which may be thought of without trouble, because it is not really present and in question. But the Evangelist in recording the words strips off the mask.

Ver. 6. But this he said, not because he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and, having the bag, bare away what was put therein. Matthew mentions the murmuring on the part of some of the disciples: evidently, therefore, the plausible remonstrance of Judas led more honest and guileless minds than his to share in the wonder which his words expressed. John speaks of Judas only, as he alone reveals the real motive of the complaint. But though Matthew says nothing at this point of Judas or his covetousness, it is very significant that, immediately after relating the answer of Jesus, he tells us that Judas went to the rulers and said, 'What will ye give me?' The somewhat remarkable word rendered 'bag' is found twice only in the New Testament, here and in chap. xiii. 29: in the Septuagint it occurs in 2 Chron. xxiv. only (vers. 8, 10, 11). The last quoted passages will show the meaning of the word more clearly: it was not a bag, but rather a small box or chest. As in the only passages of the Old Testament in which the word occurs it denotes a receptacle for offerings made to the temple, it is perhaps more than a coincidence that it is here chosen by John when he would speak of the small store of money possessed by Jesus (the True temple) and His disciples,—money derived from the voluntary offerings of the few who had recognised His glory and consecrated their substance to the supply of His wants. Another word in this verse requires remark, that which in the Authorised Version appears as 'bare,' but which we have rendered 'bare away.' The former is the more common meaning of the word both in classical Greek and in the New Testament; but the latter (which often occurs in later Greek) is certainly intended by John in a later verse of the Gospel (chap. xx. 15, 'if thou have borne him away'). It seems all but impossible that the word can have the neutral meaning here: partly because, after the mention of the dishonesty of Judas, the statement that he carried that which was cast into the common chest would be a strange anti-climax; and partly because it would be difficult to see why John should write such a sentence as this, 'and, having the bag, carried what was put therein.'

Ver. 7. Jesus therefore said, Let her alone, that for the day of the preparation for my burial she may keep it. The meaning of the word which in the Authorised Version is rendered 'burial' is made clear by chap. xix. 40 (where substantially the same word is used); 'they took the body of Jesus and wrapped it in linen cloths with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to prepare for burial.' The true reading of the Greek text, that which our rendering represents, undoubtedly presents a difficulty, as we, knowing that our Lord is speaking of the day then present, cannot understand how Jesus can say 'that . . . she may keep it.' The simplest solution of the difficulty, were it admissible, is afforded by the

rendering, 'Suffer that she may have kept it;' but it is very doubtful whether the Greek words can admit of this translation. Another suggestion is that, as the quantity of nard was so great, our Lord in saying 'that she may keep it' refers to the portion still remaining in the flask. The objection to this is found in what has been said of the mode of opening the flask and in the 'pouring' described by the other Evangelists: it is not easy to see that any portion worth speaking of could still remain. Hence we must probably seek for an explanation of a different kind. We must not forget that these words were enigmatical, and intentionally so. Our Lord was not distinctly affirming that this day was, so to speak, the day on which He was prepared for entombment: it was His wont to use language which but partially revealed the approaching event, which seemed to unenlightened hearers to contain only some dark hint of trouble impending, but which stood forth in luminous significance when the implied prophecy was ready to be fulfilled. Hence here, in speaking of the (unconscious or half-unconscious) purpose of Mary, He uses words which leave the time of the conception and fulfilment of the purpose altogether doubtful. His answer amounts to this: Meddle not with the intention that she has had to keep this for the day on which I must be prepared for the tomb. It is possible that the sentence is left incomplete, and that there is a break between the two parts:—'Let her alone;'—'that she may keep it unto the day,' etc. Such an elliptic use of a clause of purpose is not uncommon in this Gospel. If we may assume that we have an example of this usage here, the meaning will be, It is, or, It was, or, She hath bought this ointment, that she might keep it, etc. The meaning is almost the same as that previously given.

The word which our Lord uses in this verse shows in what light this section is to be viewed. It is not so much the living Saviour that we have before us, as the Saviour on whom sentence of death has been passed. At the feet of Him whom 'the Jews' are seeking to kill, and whom false friends are betraying, faith pours her richest treasures. Mary thought only of showing her reverence and love: Jesus sees in it a prophetic recognition of the impending event which crowned His humiliation and became His exaltation. The Evangelist relates an unconscious prophecy on the part of a disciple, as he has related a prophecy by an enemy who 'spake not of himself' (chap. xi. 51).

Ver. 8. **For the poor always ye have with you, but me ye have not always.** The duty of giving to the poor is fully recognised: it must never be forgotten. But there are moments when what may seem lavish waste upon objects visible only to the eye of faith are to be commended for the faith that is present in them. How often has the history of the world borne testimony to the truth thus declared by Jesus! The very charity that cares for the poor whom we see has been kept alive by faith in, and devotion to, the crucified Redeemer whom we cannot see.

Ver. 9. **The common people of the Jews therefore learned that he was there: and they came, not for Jesus' sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the dead.** Faith and unbelief have revealed themselves in the case of the friends and the enemies of Jesus, and especially in the deed of Mary and the words of Judas. But the sifting process which

accompanies every manifestation of Jesus extends to a wider circle. Once more (comp. chap. xi. 45, 46), and much more clearly than before, the Evangelist records the division amongst 'the Jews' themselves; for we have no right whatever to take this term in any other than that sense which is so firmly established in this Gospel. That very circle of Jewish influence and power in which till lately the spirit of narrow bigotry and fanaticism had found its expression in determined hostility to Jesus is divided into two classes, 'the common people of the Jews,' and the rulers in this ruling faction, 'the high priests.'

Vers. 10, 11. **But the chief priests consulted that they might put Lazarus also to death; because that by reason of him many of the Jews went away, and believed in Jesus.** When the rulers found that even their own adherents were deserting them (comp. chap. xi. 48), their rage knew no bounds. Lazarus had not incurred their displeasure, but everything that ministered to the success of the cause of Jesus must be swept out of the way. It is easy to see that the conflict of Jesus with the Jews is continually growing in intensity, and has well-nigh reached its climax. The effect produced by the recent miracle has been great beyond all previous example. Yet we cannot but feel that to the Evangelist himself the miracle would be most precious as a 'sign;' and that what he intends us to feel most deeply is the contrast between the rulers bent on His death and the calm majesty of Him who is 'the Resurrection and the Life,' in whose presence are Lazarus, the trophy and emblem of His power over life physical, and believers come from the very ranks of His adversaries to receive life spiritual through believing in Him.

Ver. 12. **The next day, that is, the day following the feast in Bethany (see on ver. 2), and therefore our Sunday; the day, it may be observed, fixed in the tradition of the Church for the triumphal entry, tradition thus confirming the exegesis of the text, and finding in the latter support for its own correctness. This first day of the Jewish week was the 10th Nisan, the day on which the typical Paschal lamb was selected and set apart for sacrifice (Ex. xii. 3).—The common people that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem.** 'The common people' here spoken of are not 'the Jews' (ver. 9), but the multitude that had assembled at Jerusalem at the time in order to celebrate the Passover. It would seem that this crowd was afterwards joined by those belonging to Jerusalem itself who had gone out previously to Bethany to see Jesus (ver. 17). Of the impression produced upon the latter we have already heard. The feelings animating the former appear both in their actions and in their words.

Ver. 13. **Took the branches of the palm trees.** The word rendered 'branches' occurs only here in the New Testament. It is the top of a palm tree where the fruit is produced. We are to understand by the word, therefore, not branches only, but fruit-bearing branches, those from which in due season the fruit would hang. Hence it is not palms of victory that we have before us, but the palm branches of the feast of Tabernacles, the most characteristic feature of that greatest festival of the year, when the last fruits, 'the wine and the oil' as well as 'the corn,' were ripe, and when the Messiah was expected to come to His temple.



Hence also the articles before 'branches' and 'palm trees,' not to mark palm trees growing by the wayside, but the well-known palm branches so closely connected with the feast. With the idea of this feast the Jews had been accustomed to associate the highest blessings of Messianic times, and at the moment, therefore, when they hail Jesus as the long expected Messiah and King, the thoughts of it naturally fill their minds. — And went forth to meet him, and they cried out, **Hosanna: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord, and, The King of Israel.** The words, thus uttered with loud shouts of joy, correspond to the action of which we have spoken. Those in the first clause of the quotation are taken from Ps. cxviii. 26, and are words which were undoubtedly used at the feast of Tabernacles. Whether we consider them in connection with their place in the psalm or with the typical meaning of the feast, they were peculiarly appropriate to the present moment. The psalm was acknowledged to be Messianic, and both psalm and feast celebrate the triumphant coming of Messiah to His house and people, when the gates of righteousness are opened and Israel goes in and praises the Lord (Ps. cxviii. 19). The Lord, too, appears in the psalm in precisely the same character as that in which we have Him here before us, that of one who has suffered and overcome (ver. 22). The appellation given to Jesus in the second clause, and probably to be regarded as a second cry, points onward to the prophecy of Zechariah (chap. ix. 9) quoted in ver. 15. *Hosanna* is a rendering into Greek letters of the Hebrew words, 'Save, we pray' (Ps. cxviii. 25).

Vers. 14, 15. **And Jesus, when he had found a young ass, sat thereon: as it is written, Fear not, daughter of Zion, behold, thy King cometh, sitting on an ass's colt.** Jesus 'found' the ass, having taken means to find it (comp. Matt. xxi. 2; Mark xi. 1; Luke xix. 30; comp. also chap. i. 43). It is a 'young' ass, expression being thus given to the fact that it had not been previously used for any burden (Mark xi. 2). The whole passage brings out a view of Jesus in this entry into Jerusalem that we may readily forget. We see at once the glory of the Saviour. He who thus approaches Jerusalem is a King, the King of Israel (ver. 14), the King of Zion (ver. 15): the progress is royal: the entry is triumphant. But the main thought of the Evangelist is that humiliation, suffering, and death characterize this King: He is a sacrifice: and in being a sacrifice His true glory lies. The change from 'Rejoice greatly' to 'Fear not' (no doubt made by the Evangelist himself, see chap. ii. 17) is remarkable. It may spring from his profound sense of the majesty of Jesus (Rev. i. 17): there is fear to be dispelled before the joy of His presence can be felt. The context in Zechariah, however, suggests another sense. The King comes to defend His people; He comes 'having salvation': let Zion fear no more. So understood, John's words contain the meaning of the whole passage quoted. The prayer 'Hosanna' is answered.

Ver. 16. **These things understood not his disciples at the first.** What was it that the disciples did not understand at the time? The true application of the prophecy of Zechariah now pointed out? Certainly not. It was the events themselves now occurring that were dark to them. They were not seen in their true light as a magni-

fying, as a prefigurative glorifying, of a suffering Messiah,—were not seen to contain within them the great mystery of exaltation through and in the midst of suffering. For similar want of appreciation by the disciples of what was passing before them, comp. chap. ii. 22, and note there.—**But when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and that they did these things unto him.** The ignorance of the disciples was corrected by experience. What they did not understand now, they understood when the resurrection and ascension had taken place. The light of that glorification shed light alike upon the sufferings and the partial glorifications of Jesus that had gone before.

Vers. 17, 18. **The multitude therefore that was with him when he called Lazarus out of the tomb and raised him from the dead, bare witness. For this cause also the multitude went to meet him, because they heard that he had done this sign.** These verses are not a returning to the story after a digression in ver. 16, nor a continuation of the narrative, as if the picture had not yet been complete. They are a recapitulation of two leading facts already mentioned, the first of which seems to be closely connected with the second—(1) that many of 'the Jews,' led to believe in Jesus by the miracle which they had seen (xi. 45), became now, like the disciples, themselves His witnesses; (2) that 'the multitude,' although they had not seen the miracle, yet hearing of it, had also been led to faith and homage (xii. 12-15). At the same time, however, there is an important and instructive difference between the two acts thus referred to. The first proceeds from those who had been 'with Him when He raised Lazarus from the dead;' the second from those who had not themselves been witnesses of the miracle, but had 'heard that He had done this sign.' The difference corresponds precisely to that alluded to in chap. xx. 29; and it thus forms an interesting illustration of the manner in which, throughout all this Gospel, the Evangelist seizes upon those aspects of events that bring out the great principles of which his mind is full. The correspondence appears still further in this, that the homage of those who 'did not see' is that of the second picture which, as always, is climactic to the first (comp. xx. 29); for the impression produced upon the mind of John by the second act of homage is not due to the simple circumstance that this multitude 'went to meet' Jesus. It is due to the titles which they had ascribed to Him at ver. 13, the one expressing His peculiar Messianic distinction, the other rising to the highest point of Old Testament prophecy (comp. on i. 49). It has only further to be noticed that the effects alluded to are connected with the miracle as a 'sign.' As such, embodying life in the midst of death, life triumphant over death, it draws out faith to a spectacle so glorious, to a Worker accomplishing so mighty a work.

Ver. 19. **The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, Behold how that ye prevail nothing. Lo, the world is gone away after him.** The exaggeration of their words illustrates the alarm and hopelessness of the Pharisees. The impression made is too great to permit them to look at the facts only as they are. The danger of the situation is enhanced by their fears, and they speak more strongly than even the occasion, striking as it was, demanded. It is at the same time highly

probable that the Evangelist sees in their language one of those unconscious prophecies so frequently noticed in his Gospel. The second act of the twelfth chapter is over, and the humbled Redeemer is still the conqueror. The third act presents the same lesson in a still more striking light.

Ver. 20. **And there were some Greeks from among them that came up to worship at the feast.** A third illustration of the homage paid to Jesus. The account is given by John alone, and the time is left by him indeterminate. From ver. 36 we may perhaps infer that it was considerably later in the week than the event last recorded; but the want of any definite statement on the point, and the fact that the issue of the request is not recorded, show that the Evangelist occupies himself only with the idea of the scene. The persons spoken of are Greeks (not Greek-speaking Jews), therefore Gentile by birth, probably proselytes, certainly (as appears by 'from among' not 'among') sharers in the faith and purposes of the other pilgrims at the feast. They are part of those referred to in chap. vii. 35 and x. 16. Still more, they are the earnest and first-fruits of that 'world' which the Pharisees have just spoken of as 'going after' Jesus.

Ver. 21. **These came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and asked him saying, Sir, we would see Jesus.** To suppose that their object is to ask Jesus to institute a mission to the Gentiles, or to come to them Himself, is to misapprehend the nature of the situation. It is their own personal faith that John desires to bring out.

Ver. 22. **Philip cometh and telleth Andrew: Andrew cometh, and Philip, and they tell Jesus.** Why these Greeks should particularly address themselves to Philip; why Philip should be here described as 'from Bethsaida of Galilee'; why Philip should tell Andrew; and why Andrew, as appears from the peculiar mode in which the communication is mentioned, should have been the spokesman of the pair, are questions to which it is not easy to give a satisfactory reply. It may be that Philip was the first disciple whom they met; that the mention of his place of residence is simply for more complete identification of the man; that the bond of companionship between him and Andrew may have been close (a circumstance that may also throw light on their proximity to each other at vi. 7, 8); and that Andrew, always one of the first four apostles mentioned in the apostolic lists, may have stood in nearer relation to Jesus than Philip, or perhaps have been the more ready speaker of the two. The more, however, the Gospel of John is studied, the less shall we be disposed to be content with these explanations, or to think that there was nothing further in the mind of a writer so much accustomed to see even in apparently accidental and trifling circumstances deeper meanings than those which at first strike the eye. Such a meaning he may have seen in the facts which he now, after so long an interval, recalls. It is at least worthy of notice that in chap. vi. at the feeding of the 5000, which has undoubtedly a symbolical as well as a literal meaning, not only are Philip and Andrew the only two disciples named, but they there play exactly the same part as in the present instance; for Philip is first appealed to but is perplexed, while Andrew draws from Jesus the solution of

the difficulty. Thus also in the incident before us, John may have beheld an analogy to the same scene, an illustration of the fact that both Jews and Gentiles shall be conducted by the same path to the 'bread of life.' These hungering Greeks are like the hungering Jews when the loaves were multiplied, and those whose difficulties in the way of satisfying the latter were removed by the word of Jesus, are also those whose difficulties in the way of satisfying the former are removed by the same word.

Ver. 23. **And Jesus answereth them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified.** The glorification here spoken of must be that of chap. xiii. 31, 32, and xvii. 1, 5, the latter of which also follows a moment designated exactly as the present one,—'The hour is come.' But the 'glorification' of these passages consists in the full manifestation of Jesus when, all His labours and sufferings over, He shall be elevated, with the Father, to the possession and exercise of that power to carry out His work upon its widest scale which was now limited by the conditions of His earthly lot. Hence the bringing in of the Gentiles, though it does not constitute that glory, is immediately connected with it.

Ver. 24. **Verily, verily, I say unto you. There is a general principle lying at the root of the glorification of the 'Son of man.'** This is now to be explained and illustrated.—**Except the corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth itself alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.** Absolute death, destruction of the principle of life, is not implied. The seed does not actually die: its old covering dies that the germ of life within may spring up in higher forms of beauty, and with many grains instead of one. Such is the law of nature, and to this great law Jesus as 'Son of man' must conform: He does not simply lay down a rule for others; as representative of our humanity the rule must first find its application in Himself.

Ver. 25. **He that loveth his soul loseth it; and he that hateth his soul in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.** The law of the physical world just spoken of illustrates the law of the moral and spiritual world. 'Soul' is here the personality, the self, in man: yet not the self in the sense of selfishness, for selfishness must be destroyed not 'kept.' It is rather that which constitutes the man himself with his likings and dislikings, his loves and hatreds, his affections and desires. It is a law of the moral world then that he who so loves his soul loses it. By simply living for himself and without thought of others, he 'loses' that very thing which he desires to preserve and make happy. On the other hand, he that in this world 'hateth his soul,' his soul not brought into subjection to that law of love which is the law of God, and, so hating, denies and crucifies it in order that love may gain the mastery in him,—that man shall 'keep' it, shall keep it too unto the higher life which is not merely future, but which is even now filled with the Divine and deathless (comp. Luke xiv. 26).

Ver. 26. **If any one serve me, let him follow me.** The words apply the law just spoken of as the law of nature and of man, and therefore also as the law of Jesus, to every individual. The 'following' is neither general nor outward, but specific and inward,—a following in that path of suffering and sacrifice even to the cross, the thought of which was at the moment peculiarly

present to the mind of Jesus (comp. xiii. 36), and it supposes the possession of His spirit (comp. viii. 12). A special emphasis lies upon the first 'Me,' as if our Lord would say, 'If it be Me that any man would serve.'—**And where I am, there shall also my servant be,** in that glory to which I am immediately to be exalted (xvii. 24).—**If any one serve me, him will the Father honour.** 'Any one,' Jesus says, for the thought of the universality of His salvation now fills His breast; and '*the Father,*' even He who will be to all His sons what He is to the Son. We ought not to pass these last two clauses without observing how, amidst all that equality of sonship which runs through this part of the Gospel, the wide distinction between the Son and the sons is still preserved. In that future home of which Jesus speaks He *is*, it corresponds to His nature to be there; they shall only be brought to share it: He, too, is the Master, they 'serve.'

**Ver. 27. Now is my soul troubled.** There is no want of connection between these words and the immediately preceding verses. The connection, on the contrary, is of the closest kind. Because this is the moment of highest exaltation in the contemplation of the universal triumph symbolized in the coming of the Greeks, it is also that when all the intensity of suffering by which the triumph is procured is most present to the mind of Jesus. The verb 'troubled' is the same as in xi. 33, 'He troubled Himself.'—**And what shall I say?** Not, 'What feelings shall I cherish at this hour, What mood of mind becomes the circumstances in which I am placed?' but, 'How shall I find utterance for the emotions that now fill my heart?'—**Father, save me out of this hour.** To understand these words interrogatively, 'Shall I say, Father, save me from this hour?' as is done by many commentators, is to introduce a hesitation into the mind of Jesus which we may well believe never had place in it, and is almost, if we may venture to say so, to give the utterance a sentimental turn at variance with the solemn scene; on the other hand, viewed as a direct prayer to His Heavenly Father, they are the exemplification in His own case of the law of ver. 25. It is usually thought that Jesus prays that He may be spared the bitterness of this hour. Matt. xxvi. 39 shows that Jesus had the feeling—one perfectly free from sin—that would lead Him to escape suffering and death; but the higher law immediately comes in. He has the Father's will to do. To it He must yield His life, His self. Therefore He adds, **But for this cause** (that the Father's name may be glorified, ver. 28) **came I unto this hour.** This prayer, however, is not 'save me from,' but 'save me out of this hour,'—not for freedom from suffering, but (comp. Heb. v. 7; Acts ii. 31) for deliverance out of it. Such a prayer is as consistent with His knowledge of 'the glory that should follow' as is Matt. xxvi. 39 with Matt. xvi. 21. But the very prayer for deliverance is checked. 'For this cause' (that He may be delivered out of the hour) 'came I unto this hour:' the object of the hour of suffering is to bring triumph. We must not miss the emphasis on the word 'Father;' it is not simply God's but the Father's glory that he desires.

**Ver. 28. Father, glorify thy name.** 'Let Thy glory shine forth in Thy name, in Thy character, as Father and in all that is involved in establishing Thy fatherly relation to men.'—**There came**

**therefore a voice out of heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.** The answer is a voice from heaven which is supposed (ver. 29) by some to be thunder, by others to be that of an angel. Both these suppositions disclose the character of the voice. It was loud and terrible, a voice of awe and majesty. Such is always the meaning of thunder both in the Old Testament and the New (Ex. xix. 16; Job xxvi. 14; Ps. civ. 7; Rev. iv. 5, viii. 5, xi. 19, xiv. 2, xix. 6). Such also is the voice of an angel (Matt. xxiv. 31; 1 Thess. iv. 16; Rev. v. 2). The mixed 'thunderings and voices,' too, of the Apocalypse are an instructive comment on this voice, while the connection that it has with judgment is clearly indicated by our Lord Himself in vers. 30, 31. If this was the *manner* of the voice, its *contents* must correspond, and it seems therefore altogether inappropriate to refer the first part of the words to the ministry of Jesus in Israel now drawing to its close, the second part to the approaching proclamation of salvation to the Gentiles. In reality these two things are one, and both of them are already ideally complete. The words rather express the unchangeableness of the purpose of Him 'which is and which was and is to come,' and intimate that the great work whereby God's name was to be especially glorified would certainly, as resolved on in eternity, be accomplished.

**Ver. 29. The multitude therefore, that stood by, and heard it, said that it had thundered: others said, An angel hath spoken to him.** That a real voice had been heard is obvious from the fact that the words are actually given by the Evangelist in ver. 28, and that some at least of the multitude imagined that an angel had *spoken*. It had not, however, been understood by all: and John's object in stating this appears to be his desire to bring still more clearly out the mysterious nature of the voice,—one the apprehension of which belonged to the higher regions of the spiritual life, and which was necessarily dark to those who had not entered into the Father's plans. Jesus understood it. The Evangelist did so too. But 'the multitude' felt only that God was there.

**Ver. 30. Jesus answered and said, Not for my sake hath this voice come, but for your sakes.** He needed not the voice, for he knew that He was one with the Father, and that He was carrying out the Father's will. But they might not comprehend His sufferings, the agony of soul they now beheld, the death immediately impending; and, therefore, to show them that in all this there was no defeat on His part, but only the carrying out of the eternal purpose of the Father, the words were spoken. Then Jesus rises to the thought of that victory which, at this the very moment of His deepest humiliation and suffering, He beheld accomplished.

**Ver. 31. Now is there judgment of this world.** The 'now' is the 'now' of ver. 27, the 'hour' of ver. 23; and the primary thought to be taken into it is that of the suffering and death in the midst of which Jesus stood, and which in the purpose of God, and to the eye of faith, were so different from what they were to the eye of sense.—**Now shall the Prince of this world be cast out.** Again we have the 'now' that we have already had. The moment is the same: the cause producing the effect the same. 'This world' culminates in its prince. The title meets us again in xvi. 11, and, although with omission of the

'this,' in chap. xiv. 30. By it can only be understood Satan, whom, indeed, the Jews knew as the 'prince of the world' excluding Israel. Here there is no such exclusion; the 'world' is again used in the widest sense of the term. In its prince are concentrated the powers that come between man and God. But he 'shall be cast out,' that is, out of the world which he has ruled, so that ideally he shall have no more power in it. The expression 'cast out' is very remarkable when compared with its use in other parts of this Gospel (vi. 37, ix. 34, 35). It is excommunication from a holy community, or scene, or synagogue, or world, which is, and is to be, God's alone. The negative side of the victory of Jesus has been declared; we have now the positive.

Vers. 32, 33. **And I, if I be lifted on high out of the earth, will draw all men unto myself. But this he said, signifying by what manner of death he should die.** 'Myself' is used in emphatic contrast with, and opposition to, the 'prince of this world.' To Himself Jesus will 'draw' men; and any difficulty connected with this is not to be met by weakening the force of the word 'draw,' but by taking into account the limitations implied in the context, and in the nature of the case. The lesson alike of the whole Gospel and of experience is that some *will* not be drawn. They resist and quench the light. They love and choose the darkness. In the same way the force of 'all men' must not be weakened, although we ought to keep in view the two thoughts which the context shows us to be prominent—(1) that not 'the prince of this world,' but Jesus Himself shall have the empire of the world; (2) that not Jews alone but Gentiles, some of whom had already been seeking Him, shall be drawn. 'All men,' however, is universal in its meaning. Jesus would not merely draw some, He would draw all; and if some are not saved, it is because they deliberately refuse to submit themselves to His influence.

The condition and means of this drawing are the 'lifting on high of Jesus out of the earth.' What is this 'lifting on high'? The word has already met us in iii. 14 and viii. 28; and in the first of these passages in particular we have seen that it must be referred to the crucifixion. The whole context of this verse demands, primarily at least, a similar reference. The thought of the death of Jesus is prominent throughout. Even when He receives the homage of Mary, of the multitude, of the Greeks, He has upon Him the stamp of death. It is thus too that in ver. 33 the Evangelist explains the expression; and his explanation is confirmed by the remarkable use of the preposition 'out of' instead of 'from.' That preposition is much more applicable to the crucifixion than the ascension, and its use seems to imply that simple separation from the earth satisfies the conditions that are in the mind of Jesus. At the same time the thought of glorification must surely be included in the 'lifting on high.' In the teaching of this Gospel, indeed, the facts of crucifixion and glorification go together, and cannot be separated from each other. The dying Redeemer is glorified through death: the glorified Redeemer died that He might be glorified. The crucifixion is the complete breaking of the bond to earth: it is the introduction of the full reign of spiritual and heavenly power.

Ver. 34. **The multitude therefore answered him, We have heard out of the law that the Christ abideth for ever: and how sayest thou, The Son of man must be lifted on high? The 'multitude,' who are Jews not Greeks, have rightly understood the words of Jesus in ver. 32 to mean a lifting on high by death. But they have learned from the Scriptures (here, as in chap. x. 34, called 'the law')—probably from such passages as 2 Sam. vii. 13-15; Ps. lxxii., lxxxix., cx.; Isa. ix. 6, 7; Dan. vii. 14—that 'the Christ abideth for ever,' that, according to their interpretation, He should have a glorious and eternal reign on earth. There is thus an irreconcilable contradiction between the fate expected by Jesus and the claims which they might perhaps have otherwise allowed.—Who is this Son of man? The words are not an honest inquiry who this Son of man can be, and how he can be the Christ. They are really a rejection of the claims of Jesus. 'Who is this? We have nothing and shall have nothing to do with Him.' The interpretation thus given is greatly confirmed by the fact that the words are immediately followed not by explanation, but by solemn warning on the part of Jesus (vers. 35, 36), and by the Evangelist's own reflections on the hardness and perversity of man (vers. 37-41); while, at the same time, it is in a high degree suitable to the place occupied by them in the Gospel. 'Son of man' had been the favourite designation by Jesus of Himself. How appropriate is it that, when finally rejected, He should be rejected in that character! Have we not here also another illustration of the Evangelist's love of commemorating instances when, against themselves and as if under the guidance of an irresistible power, men were compelled to ascribe to Jesus in contempt epithets which, rightly understood, were His highest glory?**

Ver. 35. **Jesus therefore said unto them, Yet a little while is the light among you. Not so much words of pity and tenderness in order to clear away the doubts of a sincere desire to learn, as words of solemn warning that they had a day of grace granted them, but that it was now drawing to a close, and that, if they did not pass beyond all doubts to faith, they would be overtaken by darkness.—Walk as ye have the light, that darkness overtake you not. That is, 'Walk in accordance with the fact that the light now shines around you.'—And he that walketh in the darkness knoweth not whither he goeth. If they do not thus walk, thus come to the light (chap. iii. 21), the darkness will overtake them; and instead of going to the glory to which Jesus 'goeth,' they will go blindly to destruction.**

Ver. 36. **As ye have the light, believe in the light.** Nay, not only let them come to the light, but let them take a higher step and 'believe in' the light, that is, commit in trust their whole being to the light.—**That ye may become sons of light,—light your father, the element of your being, and no darkness at all in you.** Such are the last words of Jesus which the Evangelist, in describing His active ministry, has thought fit to record. How strikingly do they remind us of the opening of the Gospel, and, after the manner of our Evangelist, bind apparently far distant parts of His work into one! In the Prologue we read of the Word that 'it shineth in the darkness, and the darkness overcame it not (ver. 5). Now that Word has become incarnate,

has lived, has suffered, has been condemned to die, and for what? that we believing in Him, embracing Him in a true communion, taking His life, His light, into ourselves, may also become sons of light, shining in the darkness, and the darkness overcoming us not.—These things spake Jesus, and having gone away he was hidden from them. In chap. viii. 59 we were told that 'Jesus hid Himself, and went out of the temple.' Here, as became the moment that closed His public ministry, the departure is more complete,—

marked by a finality which had no existence then. It is supposed by many commentators that He went to Bethany, and it may have been so. But the fact to be mainly observed is the fresh illustrations supplied by John's silence of the manner in which, to his mind, the ideal surpasses the historic interest. The departure itself and the consequent close of Israel's probation is the main point. All else passes out of view before sad reflection upon the unbelief which Israel has exhibited.

## CHAPTER XII. 37-50.

### *Lamentation over the Unbelief of the Jews; and Summary of the Public Ministry of Jesus.*

37 **B**UT though he had done so <sup>a</sup> many miracles <sup>1</sup> before them, <sup>a</sup> Chap. ii. 23,  
38 yet <sup>2</sup> they believed not on <sup>3</sup> him: That the saying of <sup>xx. 30, xxi. 25.</sup>  
Esaias <sup>4</sup> the prophet might be <sup>5</sup> fulfilled, which he spake, <sup>b</sup> Chap. xiii.  
<sup>c</sup> Lord, who hath <sup>6</sup> believed our report? and to whom hath the <sup>18, xv. 25.</sup>  
39 arm of the Lord been revealed? <sup>7</sup> Therefore <sup>8</sup> they could not <sup>xvii. 12,</sup>  
40 believe, because that Esaias <sup>9</sup> said again, <sup>xxix. 9, 32,</sup> He hath blinded <sup>xix. 24, 36</sup>  
their eyes, and <sup>10</sup> hardened their heart; that they should not <sup>c</sup> Isa. liii. 1.  
see with *their* eyes, nor understand <sup>11</sup> with *their* heart, and be <sup>Rom. x. 16.</sup>  
41 converted, <sup>12</sup> and I should heal them. These things said <sup>d</sup> Isa. vi. 10.  
42 Esaias, <sup>13</sup> when <sup>14</sup> he <sup>15</sup> saw his glory, and spake of him. <sup>16</sup> Never- <sup>See Matt.</sup>  
theless <sup>17</sup> among the chief <sup>18</sup> rulers also <sup>19</sup> many believed on <sup>xiii. 14, 15;</sup>  
him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess *him*, <sup>Acts xxviii. 26.</sup>  
43 lest they should be put out of the synagogue: For <sup>20</sup> they <sup>f</sup> Chap. ix. 22.  
loved the <sup>21</sup> praise <sup>22</sup> of men more than the praise <sup>23</sup> of God. <sup>g</sup> Chap. v. 42,  
44 Jesus <sup>24</sup> cried and said, <sup>25</sup> He that believeth on <sup>26</sup> me, believeth <sup>h</sup> Chap. vii.  
45 not on <sup>27</sup> me, but on <sup>28</sup> him that sent me. And <sup>29</sup> he that seeth <sup>28, 37.</sup>  
46 me seeth <sup>30</sup> him that sent me. <sup>31</sup> I am come a light <sup>32</sup> into the <sup>i</sup> Chap. viii.  
world, that whosoever <sup>33</sup> believeth on <sup>34</sup> me should <sup>35</sup> not abide <sup>19, xiv. 7</sup>  
47 in <sup>36</sup> darkness. <sup>37</sup> And if any man hear my words, and believe <sup>h</sup> Chap. xiv. 9.  
not, <sup>38</sup> I judge him not: for I came not to judge the <sup>39</sup> world, <sup>i</sup> Chap. i. 4.  
48 but to save the world. He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not <sup>40</sup> my words, <sup>41</sup> hath one that judgeth him: <sup>42</sup> the word that I have <sup>iii. 19, viii. 12, xi. 9.</sup>  
49 spoken, <sup>43</sup> the same shall judge him in the last day. For <sup>44</sup> I <sup>m</sup> Chap. viii.  
have not spoken <sup>45</sup> of myself; but the Father which sent me, he <sup>46</sup> <sup>n</sup> Chap. iii. 17,  
<sup>47</sup> <sup>48</sup> <sup>49</sup> <sup>50</sup> <sup>Comp. ix. 39.</sup>

<sup>1</sup> signs <sup>2</sup> omit yet <sup>3</sup> in <sup>4</sup> word of Isaiah <sup>5</sup> said  
<sup>6</sup> omit hath <sup>7</sup> was the arm of the Lord revealed? <sup>8</sup> For this cause  
<sup>9</sup> because Isaiah <sup>10</sup> add he <sup>11</sup> and perceive <sup>12</sup> turned <sup>13</sup> Isaiah  
<sup>14</sup> because <sup>15</sup> and he spake concerning him <sup>16</sup> add even from  
<sup>17</sup> omit chief <sup>18</sup> omit also <sup>19</sup> in <sup>20</sup> Because  
<sup>21</sup> glory <sup>22</sup> glory <sup>23</sup> But Jesus <sup>24</sup> beholdeth  
<sup>25</sup> As light I have come <sup>26</sup> every one that <sup>27</sup> may <sup>28</sup> add the  
<sup>29</sup> And if any one shall have heard my sayings and have guarded them not  
<sup>30</sup> sayings <sup>31</sup> I spake <sup>32</sup> Because <sup>33</sup> I spake not

gave me<sup>34</sup> a commandment, what I should say, and what I  
 50 should speak. And I know that his commandment is 'life' Chap. vi. 27.  
 xvii. 3. everlasting :<sup>35</sup> whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father<sup>36</sup> Chap. iii. 34.  
 vii. 16, viii.  
 28, xiv. 24.  
 said<sup>36</sup> unto me, so I speak.

<sup>34</sup> he hath given

<sup>35</sup> is eternal life

<sup>36</sup> hath said

CONTENTS. The public ministry of Jesus has been brought to a close, and the moment has been marked by words the melancholy pathos of which can hardly be mistaken, 'Having gone away, He was hidden from the n.' (ver. 36). These words, applied in the first instance to the outward circumstances of the Saviour, receive now at the hands of the Evangelist all the depth of their meaning, when he gives us his last reflections on the hardness and unbelief displayed by Israel in rejecting the glorious self-manifestation of its Lord (vers. 37-43). After this we have in the second part of the section, closing the fourth and leading division of the Gospel, a short summary of that teaching of Jesus to which Israel had refused to listen (vers. 44-50).

Ver. 37. But though he had done so many signs before them, they believed not in him. The words of chap. i. 10, 11 seem to echo in our ears, 'He was in the world, and the world came into being through Him, and the world knew Him not. He came unto His own home, and His own accepted Him not.' All the particulars of the statement heighten the effect. In the original there is a certain degree of emphasis on 'He,'—One so full of power and grace, so divine in majesty, so human in tenderness. Then it was 'signs' that He had wrought, not mere miracles, but things that were the very expression of the Son and in Him of the Father. These signs, too, had been 'so many' (see note on chap. vi. 2); for it is number, not greatness, that in our Gospel is always referred to in this word (chaps. vi. 9, xiv. 9, xxi. 11). And, once more, the signs had been wrought 'before them,' so that they could not be mistaken (comp. chap. x. 4). Yet, notwithstanding all this, their unbelief had been continued, wilful, as constant as the call addressed to them.

Ver. 38. That the word of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled, which he said, Lord, who believed our report? and to whom was the arm of the Lord revealed? The quotation is from Isa. liii. 1; and one or two expressions in it require notice before we endeavour to ascertain its exact force and meaning, either as originally spoken by the prophet or as now applied by the Evangelist. By 'report' we are to understand the burden of the prophet's message, the word as *heard* rather than as *spoken* (comp. 2 Sam. iv. 4 in the Hebrew; Rom. x. 16; 1 Thess. ii. 13); and by 'arm of the Lord,' the manifestation of His power alike in the deliverance of His people and in the destruction of His enemies (Deut. v. 15; Isa. lxiii. 5). The words 'that it might be fulfilled,' so frequently used by Matthew as he points out the harmony of each successive event with the Divine plan and counsel, here meet us for the first time in this Gospel. More is meant than what we commonly understand by the fulfilment of a prediction. That which in its principle and its partial realisation connected itself with the events of which the inspired prophet directly spoke is here declared

to be 'filled up,' to have received its complete accomplishment. By whom then, and in what circumstances, were the words of Isaiah originally spoken? We answer, By repentant Israel; by Israel after it has come to faith, and when it looks back sorrowfully upon the fact that the message of Jehovah's love, and the manifestations of His power, had been disregarded by the great body of the nation. In a similar spirit the Evangelist now looks back, seeing in the unbelief which rejected the Messiah Himself the 'fulfilment' of that unbelief which had long before rejected the Messianic message of the prophet. Israel was ever the same: 'As their fathers did, so did they' (Acts vii. 51); they 'filled up' the measure of their fathers (Matt. xxiii. 32). This is the explanation of what caused John so much astonishment and sorrow. But it is not all.

Vers. 39, 40. For this cause they could not believe, because Isaiah said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and he hardened their heart, that they should not see with their eyes and perceive with their heart, and be turned, and I should heal them. 'For this cause' does not refer so much to the words themselves of the preceding verse, as to that Divine plan which John sees that they express, and whose further progress, involving a judicial hardening of those who, as we have seen, had first hardened themselves, is expressed in the words that follow. The quotation is from Isa. vi. 9, 10, and the changes, especially in that from the commanding to the narrative form, are only such as the prophet himself would have made had he taken up the position of our Evangelist and, at the close of his prophetic ministry, related what he had been made the instrument of effecting. Israel was so wilfully rejecting God in the prophet's days, that the moment for God's judicial treatment of His people had come. By him, therefore, God sent them a new message, that by their rejection of it the blinding of their eyes and the hardening of their hearts might be complete; that they might finally and conclusively reject the tidings through which, otherwise, Isaiah would have 'healed' them. Was not this exactly what had happened now? He in whom all the prophets of Israel were 'fulfilled' had come; and John sees Him uttering His mournful complaint over that wilful obstinacy of Israel which had provoked the judicial dealings of God, in the same language as that in which His servant of old, had been speaking in the narrative form, would have spoken. Thus the words of the Lord to Isaiah (in chap. vi. 9, 10), now quoted, describe the radical and unchanging condition of carnal Israel; and, as applied here, they mean that God had made the self-manifestation of Jesus the instrument of blinding and hardening those who had chosen unbelief. Thus also, it will be observed, God is the subject of 'hath blinded' and of 'hardened;' and 'I should heal them' must be understood of Jesus Himself. Hence, accordingly, the remarkable words of the next verse.

Ver. 41. **These things said Isaiah, because he saw his glory; and he spake concerning him.** When we remember that the chapter of Isaiah from which the quotation of vers. 39, 40 is taken is that in which the prophet sees the glory of the Lord, it may appear at first sight as if it were only the glorious vision there beheld by him that is here referred to. Yet it is impossible not to feel that this 41st verse, connected as it is in the closest manner with the words immediately preceding it, must really refer to that work of Christ to which the Evangelist had applied the prophet's words; and that 'His glory' must point to the glory of the self-manifestation of Jesus by means of the 'signs' of ver. 37 (comp. chap. ii. 11). It is clear, therefore, that John intentionally unites that Jesus who is the 'I' in 'I shall heal them' with 'the Lord' spoken of in Isa. vi. 1, etc.—unites, in short, the Incarnate Word as Messiah and Prophet and the Divine Word in His glory, 'sitting on a throne high and lifted up, and His train filling the temple.' But that is precisely the lesson of his whole Gospel; and it is this truth, so deeply imbedded in it, that gives unity and force to the passage we have been considering.

One point must still be briefly noticed in connection with these verses. If the Jews were thus doomed to unbelief, where was their guilt? The answer is, that they are supposed to have *wilfully* rejected the revelation and grace of God *before* that point of their history is reached which is now in the eye both of prophet and Evangelist. Their whole previous training ought to have prepared them for receiving the claims of Jesus. They abused that training; they ceased to be 'of the truth;' they blinded themselves; and judicial blindness followed. It is only necessary to add that what we have spoken of as a 'previous' training may belong to the order of thought rather than to that of time. Almost at the very instant when the Almighty appeals to me by the presentation of Jesus, He may be appealing to me by His providence, His grace, the general working of His Spirit, so as to make me ready to receive Jesus; these dealings I may so use that the *best* of my character may at once appear, and if I am judicially doomed to darkness, the very sentence that dooms me is the consequence of my own folly and sin.

Ver. 42. **Nevertheless, even from among the rulers many believed in him.** The language which John has used is general: as a nation Israel has rejected Jesus. But His mission has not been without effect on many individuals (comp. chaps. i. 11, 12, iii. 32, 33): even from among the members of the Sanhedrin (see chap. vii. 48) many believed in Him. Persons believed, belonging to a body in which the bitterest foes of Jesus bore rule; and greatness of unbelief is thus in some degree counterbalanced by greatness of faith. —But because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue. We can hardly suppose that these words are added in order to show that the faith spoken of on the part of many of the rulers formed no real exception to the general statement of Israel's unbelief. They simply tell us that, although that faith was genuine, it needed strength and growth. It was not powerful enough to surmount the obstacles placed in its way by the resolution of chap. ix. 22; and it had not reached the point at which alone it could be said that,

in 'leading out' its possessors after the true Shepherd, its complete victory was gained (chap. x. 3, 4). On the prominence now given to the Pharisees among the enemies of Jesus, see note on chap. vii. 32.

Ver. 43. **Because they loved the glory of man more than the glory of God.** It may seem at first sight as if these words were inconsistent with those of chap. v. 44, and the apparent inconsistency is not to be removed either by giving to the word translated 'glory' its etymological signification 'opinion,' or by supposing that the faith of these rulers was not true. The solution of the difficulty is to be found in observing (1) that the 'glory' here referred to is that of vers. 23 and 41, a glory involving the unity of Jesus and His people. Let the latter identify themselves with the former, take up His cross, have part in His sufferings and death, 'confess' Him, and they shall also be partakers of His 'glory.' This is not exactly the same glory as that of chap. v. 44.—(2) That the form of expression is not the same, here 'of God,' 'of men'—there 'from God,' the preposition used in the latter case leading more directly to the thought of glory offered by God, and deliberately rejected. The reflections of the Evangelist are at an end, and once more Jesus is introduced to us.

Ver. 44. **But Jesus cried and said.** In what sense are we to understand the cry and utterance about to be mentioned? Was it public or private? Or is it strictly speaking no utterance of Jesus at all, but only a summary by the Evangelist himself of the main points of that teaching of Jesus which he had recorded in the previous part of his Gospel? That it was not public is clear from the fact that the ministry had closed at ver. 36; and it is impossible to meet this difficulty by the supposition that the cry is merely a continuation of the first words of that verse. That it was not private is equally clear, partly from the use of 'cried' (comp. vii. 28, 37), partly because the nature and tone of the words themselves are such as to suggest that Jesus is speaking to 'the Jews,' not to His disciples. The only supposition therefore is, that the passage contains an epitome or summary of the words of Jesus to the Jews. The words 'cried and said' are therefore equivalent to, This was the teaching of Jesus when He spake openly to the world. The Evangelist, however, does not give the summary in his own words, but (we can hardly doubt) makes use of actual sayings uttered by his Master at various times,—sayings which for the most part combine and give forcible expression to truths which we have found stated in the discourses of this Gospel. There is in this section but little that is new; on the other hand, there is very little actual repetition of verses from earlier chapters. If our view of the passage is correct, the words were spoken by Jesus; the selection is made by John.

**He that believeth in me, believeth not in me, but in him that sent me.** This is the first and almost the only place in this Gospel (see chap. xiv. 1) in which the words 'believe in,' so constantly associated with our Lord (see chap. ii. 11), are used in reference to the Father. Once indeed, in chap. v. 24, the Authorised Version reads 'believeth on Him that sent me,' but, as we have seen, this is a mistranslation. No words could more strikingly express what Jesus had accomplished for those who received Him: He had led them to

the Father, and through Jesus they are now believers in God (1 Pet. i. 21), 'throwing themselves with absolute trust' on God revealed in Christ. Hence the appropriateness of the words in this place, where the full effect of the mission of Jesus upon the many (ver. 40) and upon the few is traced. The form of expression here recalls chap. vii. 16: as there Jesus declares that the words which He speaks are words received from God, so here that the faith He has awakened and rendered possible is faith in God. In each relation He is Mediator between God and men.

Ver. 45. **And he that beholdeth me, beholdeth him that sent me.** In chap. vi. 40 (see note) we have the same combination as in these verses: 'He that beholdeth the Son and believeth in Him.' A little later the same thought finds fuller expression in words addressed to disciples (chap. xiv. 9). Compare chap. i. 18, xv. 24.

Ver. 46. **As light I have come into the world, that every one that believeth in me may not abide in the darkness.** Here we have the substance of the Saviour's last words to the multitude (vers. 35, 36) and the earlier sayings of chap. viii. 12, ix. 5; but nowhere has it been as clearly taught that all are 'in the darkness' until by faith in Jesus they receive light. Comp. chap. iii. 19 (Acts xxvi. 18; Col. i. 13), and especially vers. 4, 5, in the Prologue. It is easy to trace a certain connection of thought in these verses, though from the nature of the case the connection is not always very close. The first two (44, 45) are occupied with the relation between the disciples of Jesus and the Father who sent Him; the next three (46, 47, 48), with the relation of Jesus to the world; the last two, with His relation to the Father. From beholding (ver. 45) to light is a natural transition; from this point each verse directly leads the way to that which follows it. The thought is at first expressed in the language of figure (ver. 46), then with studious plainness and simplicity.

Ver. 47. **And if any one shall have heard my sayings and have guarded them not.** It is necessary here to introduce an unusual word in the translation. To 'keep' the sayings or words of Jesus is a phrase which often meets us in this Gospel (chap. viii. 51, etc.): 'guard' is an un-

common word with the Evangelist, found only here and in ver. 25, and (in conjunction with 'keep') in chap. xvii. 12. That the sayings may be kept and not lost from memory and life, they must be guarded with all care, and *watchfully* observed. Comp. Matt. vii. 26; Luke vi. 49. **I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world.** Comp. chap. iii. 17, viii. 15.

Ver. 48. **He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my sayings, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I spake, the same shall judge him in the last day.** From the 'forgetful hearer' whose carelessness or indifference has let slip the words he should have 'guarded,' Jesus passes to the man who sets at nought both His word and Himself. Even to him that word shall come, but as a judge. As Moses was the accuser of the people (chap. v. 45) because his word, though honoured in profession, was disregarded in its spirit and design, so the very word of Jesus which they have rejected shall declare their doom. The word bore with it evidence that it was God's word: they heard not because they were not of God (chap. viii. 14, 47).

Ver. 49. **Because I spake not of myself; but the Father which sent me, he hath given me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak.** With the first words compare chap. iii. 34, v. 19, vii. 16, 17, viii. 28, xiv. 24. Of receiving a 'commandment' from the Father Jesus has spoken once only (chap. x. 18), but in later chapters we have the same thought (xiv. 31, xv. 10), which indeed is implied wherever He has spoken of Himself as sent by the Father into the world. This commandment is the expression of the Divine plan for the salvation of the world (chap. iii. 14-16). The combination of 'say' and 'speak' in the last clause is remarkable: see the note on chap. viii. 43.

Ver. 50. **And I know that his commandment is eternal life: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father hath said unto me, so I speak.** The substance of the Divine commandment is contained in the word of Jesus, and His word gives life eternal, His word is life (chap. v. 24, vi. 63, 68).

## CHAPTER XIII. 1-20.

### *The Foot-washing.*

- 1 **N**OW before the <sup>a</sup>feast of the passover, when Jesus knew <sup>a</sup> Chap. xi. 55.  
 that his <sup>b</sup>hour was come that he should depart <sup>b</sup> out of <sup>b</sup> Chap. xii. 23.  
 this world <sup>c</sup>unto the Father, having loved his own which were <sup>c</sup> See chap. ii.  
 2 <sup>d</sup>in the world, he <sup>e</sup>loved them <sup>e</sup>unto the end.<sup>d</sup> And <sup>e</sup> supper <sup>e</sup> Chap. xvi.  
 being ended,<sup>e</sup> the devil having now put <sup>f</sup>into the <sup>f</sup> heart of <sup>f</sup> 28.  
 3 Judas Iscariot, Simon's <sup>g</sup>son, to <sup>g</sup> betray him; Jesus knowing <sup>g</sup> Chap. xvii.  
 that the Father had given <sup>h</sup>all things into his hands, and that <sup>h</sup> 11.  
 4 he was come <sup>i</sup>from God, and went to God; <sup>i</sup> He riseth from <sup>i</sup> 16.  
 11 <sup>j</sup>add him <sup>j</sup> came forth <sup>j</sup> 16.

<sup>1</sup> Jesus knowing    <sup>2</sup> pass    <sup>3</sup> omit he    <sup>4</sup> to the full    <sup>5</sup> add a  
<sup>6</sup> begun    <sup>7</sup> already put it    <sup>8</sup> his    <sup>9</sup> that    <sup>10</sup> should  
<sup>11</sup> add him    <sup>12</sup> came forth    <sup>13</sup> and goeth unto God    <sup>14</sup> add the



supper, and <sup>14</sup> laid aside <sup>15</sup> his garments; and took <sup>16</sup> a towel, <sup>17</sup> and <sup>18</sup> girded himself. After that he <sup>19</sup> poureth water into a <sup>20</sup> bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe *them* <sup>21</sup> with the towel wherewith he was girded. Then cometh he <sup>22</sup> to Simon Peter: and Peter <sup>23</sup> saith unto him, Lord, dost thou <sup>24</sup> wash my feet? Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do <sup>25</sup> thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know <sup>26</sup> hereafter. Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered <sup>27</sup> him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me. Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also *my* hands <sup>28</sup> and *my* head. Jesus saith to him, He that is washed <sup>29</sup> needeth not save to wash *his* feet, but is clean every whit: and <sup>30</sup> ye are <sup>31</sup> clean, but not all. <sup>32</sup> For he knew who should betray him; <sup>33</sup> therefore said he, Ye are not all clean.

<sup>34</sup> So after <sup>35</sup> he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set <sup>36</sup> down again, he said unto them, Know <sup>37</sup> ye what I have done to you? <sup>38</sup> Ye call me Master and Lord: <sup>39</sup> and ye say well; for *so* I am. If I then, <sup>40</sup> *your* Lord and Master, <sup>41</sup> have washed your feet: ye also ought to wash one <sup>42</sup> another's feet. For I have given <sup>43</sup> you an example, that <sup>44</sup> ye should do as I have done <sup>45</sup> to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, <sup>46</sup> The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he <sup>47</sup> that is sent greater than he that sent him. <sup>48</sup> If ye know these <sup>49</sup> things, happy are ye if ye do them. I speak not of you all: <sup>50</sup> I know whom <sup>51</sup> I have chosen: <sup>52</sup> but <sup>53</sup> that the scripture may be fulfilled, <sup>54</sup> He that eateth bread with me <sup>55</sup> hath <sup>56</sup> lifted up his <sup>57</sup> heel against me. Now <sup>58</sup> I tell you <sup>59</sup> before it come, <sup>60</sup> that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that <sup>61</sup> I am *he*. <sup>62</sup> Verily, verily, I say unto you, <sup>63</sup> He that receiveth whomsoever <sup>64</sup> I send receiveth me; and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me.

<sup>15</sup> layeth down	<sup>16</sup> having taken	<sup>17</sup> omit and	<sup>18</sup> Then he
<sup>19</sup> the	<sup>20</sup> He cometh therefore	<sup>21</sup> for and Peter read he	
<sup>22</sup> learn	<sup>23</sup> bathed	<sup>24</sup> him that was betraying him	<sup>25</sup> When therefore
<sup>26</sup> had sat	<sup>27</sup> Perceive	<sup>28</sup> therefore	<sup>29</sup> the Lord and the Master
<sup>30</sup> I gave		<sup>31</sup> that ye also should do even as I did	
<sup>32</sup> No servant is greater than his lord, neither one		<sup>33</sup> I chose	
<sup>34</sup> eateth my bread	<sup>35</sup> omit hath	<sup>36</sup> From henceforth	
<sup>37</sup> come to pass	<sup>38</sup> omit he		

CONTENTS. We enter here upon the fifth of those sections into which we have seen that the Gospel is divided; and the section extends to the close of chap. xvii. The scene and the circumstances of the actors in it are altogether different from what we have witnessed in chaps. v. to xii. There is a transition from the 'world' and the 'Jews,' its leading representatives, to the circle of the most intimate friends of Jesus, from struggle to quietness and peace, from denunciation of sin to an outpouring of the most tender affection in act, discourse, and prayer. The consequence is

that nowhere in the Gospel have we so full a revelation of the Father's purpose and work, of the Son's relation to it, of the great New Covenant gift of the Spirit, and of the duties, privileges, and hopes of that Church of Christ which, after He went away, was to take His place, as we find in these chapters. The first scene in the section is the Foot-washing. The subordinate parts are — (1) vers. 1-11; (2) vers. 12-20.

Ver. 1. Now before the feast of the passover, Jesus, knowing that his hour was come that he should pass out of this world unto the Father,

having loved his own which were in the world, loved them to the full. In this verse we have first a chronological notice, and next a description in three particulars of one side of the circumstances of the scene.

(1) The chronological notice, 'before the feast of the Passover.' The Passover is that mentioned in xii. 1, and more particularly described in xi. 55 as 'the Passover of the Jews.' It is significant that these last words, 'of the Jews,' are dropped in the expression before us. Jesus will partake of 'the Passover,' but not of 'the Passover of the Jews;' of the great national ordinance of Israel, but not of an ordinance the true spirit and meaning of which had perished; and which, as celebrated by 'the Jews,' had degenerated into an outward carnal form repulsive to the truly spiritual mind (comp. on ii. 13). The preposition 'before' is indeterminate, and is as suitable to an event happening *immediately*, as to one happening days, before. (2) The circumstances of one side of the scene, three in number. First, the leading person in it, 'Jesus, knowing that His hour was come,' etc. Certainly not 'although He knew,' as if His consciousness of the glory awaiting Him might have proved an obstacle to His present manifestation of Himself, had it not been overcome by love; but *because* He knew that He was about to be delivered from the toil and suffering of the world, and to be reunited to the Father in the blessedness of the most intimate communion with Him (comp. on chap. i. 1). Second, the persons with whom He deals. They were 'His own;' and they were 'in the world,' amidst its dangers and difficulties and sorrows. Third, the feelings of the heart of Jesus,—love, not the mere love of friendship, but a solemn, deep, divine love. Thus indeed He had always loved 'His own,' but His love now gains additional intensity; He loved them 'to the full.' The expression does not mean 'to the end,' for which another phrase is always used (Heb. iii. 6, 14, vi. 11; Rev. ii. 26). It is best explained by 1 Thess. ii. 16, 'to the uttermost:' the love of Jesus now reaches its highest point.

It may be well to remind our readers that we shall now ever and again, until at least we reach the close of chap. xix., meet expressions having a bearing on the great controversy, not yet conclusively laid at rest, as to the day on which the Last Supper was eaten by Jesus and His disciples, as well as to that on which the crucifixion of Jesus took place. Here the first of these two points especially concerns us; and, without going into all the particulars which would be required for a full discussion of the controversy, we would simply recall attention to the fact that the question is, Did Jesus eat the passover on the usual night, that appointed by the law, viz. the 14th of Nisan, or did He eat it on the evening of the *previous* day? It will hardly be denied that the expressions here employed point most naturally to the regular, legal night. We have already said that with this view the word 'before' in this verse is perfectly consistent.

Ver. 2. And a supper being begun, the devil having already put it into his heart that Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, should betray him. It is important to notice the exact parallelism of this verse to the preceding, both in the note of time, and in the circumstances of the scene.

(1) The chronological notice, 'a supper being begun.' It was during the course of the supper,

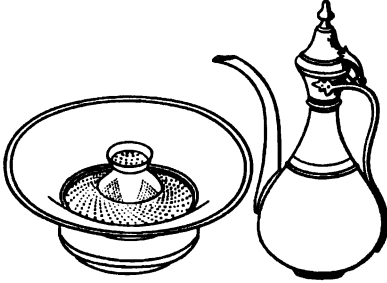
not after it was ended, that the events to be spoken of took place. That this 'supper' was not the 'feast' properly so called appears from the name 'a supper,' not 'the feast,' from ver. 29, where the 'feast' is not yet or only just begun, and from the absence of the article, which could hardly have been wanting had the word 'supper' taken up again the 'feast' of ver. 1. It was the preliminary meal at the close of which the 'feast' was celebrated.

(2) The circumstances of the other side of the scene, three in number. First, the devil, who had 'already' plotted the destruction of Jesus, and had fixed on Judas as the instrument. Second, Judas Iscariot, the victim of the devil's wiles. Third, the feelings of the devil's heart,—treachery, hatred, at the point of intensity when what had been long determined on shall be fulfilled. The three particulars are in the sharpest contrast with those in ver. 1,—the devil with Jesus, Judas with 'His own,' treachery with love. Darkness is over against light, earth over against heaven, the lie over against the truth; and between these Jesus takes His way. What has been said ought to remove the objection felt by many to the translation which we have given of this verse. None will deny that it is the correct translation of the best established Greek text, but it is thought to be impossible to speak of the heart of Satan. The expression, it will be seen, springs from the Evangelist's mode of thought, as he seeks a contrast to the heart of Jesus (comp. the marginal rendering of Job i. 8, ii. 3: 'Hast thou set thy heart on?').

Ver. 3. Jesus knowing that the Father had given him all things into his hands, and that he came forth from God, and goeth unto God. We have now that state of mind in Jesus which leads to the act about to be described. 'Knowing' takes up again the same word in ver. 1, and has the same meaning, 'because he knows.' The knowledge is summed up in three particulars—(1) That 'the Father had given all things into His hands;' the tense expressing no presentiment of coming power, but an act already past. (2) That 'He came forth from God;' the words expressing not His Divine original, which would have required another form of expression, but that He had left the presence of God as the 'Sent' of God. (3) That 'He goeth unto God,' as one who has executed His commission. The three clauses thus refer not to power or glory belonging to Jesus as the Son of God: they connect themselves with His work of redeeming love.

Ver. 4. He riseth from the supper, and layeth down his garments, and having taken a towel girded himself. How wonderful the act when compared with the circumstances (mentioned in the previous verse) by which it is introduced! In the fullest consciousness of the glory of that work of redeeming love which He had undertaken, He who was in the 'form of God' assumed the 'form,' and did the work, of 'a servant,' a slave,—nay, felt that to do this was glory. What He does, too, is rendered all the more striking by the fact that the remarkable scene described in Luke xxii. 24,—the strife among the disciples which should be the greatest,—may have just occurred. In contrast with that eager desire among His servants for superior station in the world, the Master 'riseth,' 'layeth down' His outer garments, and 'girdeth' Himself, becomes as 'he that serveth' (Luke xxii. 27).

Ver. 5. Then he poureth water into the bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded. It is impossible not to mark the minuteness with which each separate part of the wonderful work of condescension he would



Pitcher and Bason.

describe is here recorded by the Evangelist. According to the usages of the East, rendered necessary at once by the dusty nature of the roads and the imperfect covering afforded by sandals, it was customary for the master of a house, when receiving guests, to provide them with water to wash their feet (Gen. xvi. 1; xix. 2; Judg. xix. 21; Luke vii. 44). The act of washing would generally be performed by servants. Here Jesus, the Master of the feast, becomes Himself the servant.

Ver. 6. He cometh therefore to Simon Peter: he saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet? If the narrative of the actual foot-washing begins here, and ver. 5 is to be regarded as a general description of what is now related in detail, we must infer from the words before us that our Lord began with Peter. If, on the other hand, the washing begins with ver. 5, we learn now that our Lord only came to Peter in due course, so that whatever place that apostle had it was not the first. The point is of little moment. It is more important to mark the strong emphasis belonging to 'thou' and 'my': 'Lord, dost *thou* wash *my* feet?' There may be hastiness and self-will on Peter's part, but surely there is also deep reverence for his Lord and a spirit of genuine humility. We must bear in mind that as yet he looks at the matter only with the outward eye, and that he can hardly be expected to think of the deeper spiritual significance which the act possesses.

Ver. 7. Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt learn hereafter. The Great Teacher now takes in hand the task of instructing the warm-hearted but impulsive disciple in the true nature of the act performed by Him, and His reference to the future prepares the way for the revelation to be given. 'Hereafter' certainly does not refer either to Pentecost or the eternal world. The remarkable transition in this verse from 'knowest' to 'learn,' and the fact that the last of these two words is again taken up in ver. 12 (where we translate 'perceive'), afford ground for the supposition that the 'hereafter' spoken of begins with the light there thrown by Jesus Himself upon what He does. Even then, however, it can hardly be

confined to that moment. It is in the trying circumstances of the future, in the zealous discharge of the task that shall be his, and in the ripening of Christian experience, that Peter shall 'learn,' shall 'perceive,' the full meaning of what he at present feels to be so incomprehensible. He will not fully know what it is to have had his own feet washed by Jesus, until he shall have felt the need of constantly turning to Him in faith; and until, in the love ever renewed in the exercise of that faith, he too shall have washed the feet of others.

Ver. 8. Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Peter is too much amazed to comprehend at once the lesson of the previous words of Jesus. He does not even heed them; and his impulsiveness, checked for a moment, leads him to break over the barrier that has been opposed to it with greater force than before: 'Thou shalt never wash my feet.'—Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me. Now, our Lord begins to unfold the true spiritual meaning of what He is about to do. We must carefully mark the words,—first, the word 'wash,' not 'cleanse' or 'bathe,' referring to the whole body, but simply 'wash,' referring to the act which Jesus has immediately in hand,—the washing of the feet alone; secondly, 'with me,' not 'in me,' referring, not to the entire dependence of the believer upon his Lord and his completeness in Him, but to his share along with Him in a work of self-sacrificing love, triumphant over the world and crowned with glory. If we keep these two points in view, it will be at once seen that the words of Jesus before us have little reference to any mere spirit of self-will, for which Peter must substitute the childlike disposition that alone can enter into the kingdom of heaven, and also that they relate as little to our first cleansing from sin in the atoning blood of Christ. They refer to something different from either of these two great truths, and express, what we shall have to explain more fully (on ver. 20), that unless Peter enters into the spirit of that self-sacrificing work of love which Jesus performs, makes that spirit his own spirit, sees the beauty and owns the glory of the Master's becoming the servant for His people's sake (comp. Matt. xx. 28; Luke xxii. 24-27), and becomes in like manner ready to sacrifice himself if he may thereby help the humblest member of the flock of Christ, then he is going his own way, not the way of Jesus; he is choosing his own portion, not the portion of his Lord; he must be content to separate from One whom he loved with all his heart, and to have no more a part with Him either in His sufferings or His reward. It is this thought, even though it may be as yet imperfectly apprehended by the apostle, that leads to the sudden revulsion of feeling in the following verse.

Ver. 9. Simon Peter saith unto Him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head.—Peter sees that in whatever way the result may be produced, suffering Jesus to wash his feet will bring him nearer to his Master, will make him to be more 'with Him.' The thought of the hands and the head as the uncovered parts of the body naturally occurs to him; and his reasoning is that, if the washing of one part will give him a deeper interest in the Master whom he loved, much more will this be effected by the washing of more parts than one. To everything he will sub-

mit, so that it bring him nearer to Jesus and His reward.

Ver. 10. **Jesus saith to him, He that is bathed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all.** The ground of the figurative language hardly needs explanation: he who has just been cleansed in the bath has only further to wash his feet as he proceeds from the bath to the banquet in order that he may sit down there wholly clean. Peter's words had shown that he did not fully understand the application of the figure, and that he did not see that the washing of more than the feet, which had alone been in a position to contract defilement, implied that the first cleansing had not been so thorough as it really was. It was necessary, therefore, in furtherance of his training at this time, to remind him that in faith and love he had already been made completely one with Jesus, and that all now required was not an entire renewal of that first cleansing, as if men were to be born a third as well as a second time, but a preserving of it in its completeness. This was to be effected by suffering Jesus now to cleanse away any stain that could be imparted by the work of the world, but no more. A right perception of the greatness of what Christ did for us when He first united us to Himself, is as necessary to a true following of His example of love and self-denial, as is a perception of the fact that, at every step of our progress, in every part of our continued work, we need to turn to Him for the spiritualising of our earthly thoughts, the elevation of our earthly aims, and the pardon of our shortcomings and sins. Peter and the apostles ought not to forget this. They had all been truly united to Jesus except one; and there is sadness in the way in which the words are added, 'but not all.'

Ver. 11. **For he knew him that was betraying him: therefore said he, Ye are not all clean.** What a contrast to the eleven do these words present: they full of faith and love, 'clean'; Judas with his heart full of evil passions, at that very moment his treachery not a thing of the future, but of the present. And yet more! Jesus knew this. The eye that sees what is in man, saw what was in the heart of the traitor while he yet washed his feet. It may be asked, What is the import of the foot-washing in such a case? We can only answer, It is nothing but an outward rite. The complete bath must have been accepted, before the subsequent washing of the feet can bring its blessing to us, or be other than a carnal form.

Ver. 12. **When therefore he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and had sat down again, he said unto them, Perceive ye what I have done to you?** Again three particulars introduce the words of Jesus: and the frequent recurrence of this structure throughout these verses harmonizes well with the touching solemnity of the whole scene. Having washed the feet of the disciples, resumed His garments, and again taken His place at the table, Jesus proceeds to enforce the lesson of what He had done. He first awakens their attention by His question, and then proceeds.

Ver. 13. **Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am.** It was in the full consciousness of the dignity belonging to Him that (ver. 3) Jesus had entered upon this scene. It is in a similar consciousness that He now urges

its lesson. The word used for 'Master' is John's Greek rendering for the Hebrew 'Rabbi' (chap. i. 29, xx. 16). No special meaning therefore, such as 'Teacher,' is to be given it.

Ver. 14. **If I therefore, the Lord and the Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet.** The order of the titles which Jesus assumes to Himself is changed in this as compared with the preceding verse. The object appears to be to give prominence to that title of 'Lord' in the thought of which lay the strength of the obligation resting upon His disciples to do as He had done. They, then, were to wash one another's feet when He would no longer be beside them to do so: they could not bathe one another, make one another 'clean'; but this they could do in self-denying love and fellowship,—they could restore one another's failing faith and love by ever-renewed manifestations of that love to one another which, springing from the love of Jesus, leads back to Him.

Ver. 15. **For I gave you an example, that ye also should do even as I did to you.** What the giver of a commission does may well be done by the servant to whom the commission is given. It is important to observe that the act spoken of is only that of 'washing one another's feet.'

Ver. 16. **Verily, verily, I say unto you, No servant is greater than his lord; neither one that is sent greater than he that sent him.** How often does Jesus speak of Himself in this gospel as the 'Sent' of God! It is impossible to dissociate this usage from the words here, so that the same word is applied to the disciple in reference to his Lord as is applied to the Lord Himself in reference to God (comp. xvii. 18). The disciples are the 'sent,' taking the place of Him who was first 'sent' but is now gone to the Father.

Ver. 17. **If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.** Simple as might appear the duty to which the disciples were called, Jesus knew that it was a hard and trying task. He connects therefore a promise of blessedness with the actual performance of the duty.

Ver. 18. **I speak not of you all.** At this point Jesus again turns to the thought of Judas, yet not with the view of simply repeating what He had said at ver. 10. It is contemplation of the blessedness first spoken of that fills His mind, and pity for that disciple who was not only to separate himself from the others, but, in doing so, to lose their blessedness.—**I know whom I chose.** The choosing refers to election to the apostleship, not to eternal life (comp. vi. 70, xv. 16, 19). The precise object of the statement is more difficult to determine. The most probable explanation seems to be that our Lord would anticipate what could not fail to be afterwards a source of perplexity to the disciples. It will seem strange to them that a traitor should have been chosen to be one of their number; and they may even be tempted to think that, had Jesus known what He was doing, no such choice would have been made. Therefore, with much emphasis on the 'I,' he says, 'I know whom I chose. You may imagine that I have been deceived, but it is not so; I knew well what was to happen, and that it was a part of the purposes of God,'—but, **that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth my bread lifted up his heel against me.** The words are from Ps. xli. 9.

As originally used they refer to the suffering righteous man, but the Psalmist is led to employ words which have their full meaning only as applied to the ideal righteous one, that is, to Jesus; and Jesus now speaks them directly in His own person. As found here they are not a reproduction of the Septuagint, but are an original translation of the Hebrew. The figure may be taken from the tripping up of a runner in a race, or from the thought of kicking. The latter allusion is the more probable. The peculiar offensiveness of the conduct spoken of lies in the fact that the person guilty of it has 'eaten the bread' of him whom he injures, and has thus violated those laws of hospitality and friendship than which the East knew none more sacred.

Ver. 19. **From henceforth I tell you before it come to pass, that when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am.** These words can hardly mean that Jesus would henceforward tell them events that were to happen in order that, when the events did happen, they might see that He had been a true prophet and might have their faith confirmed. He is here dealing with them as with persons who are to be sent forth to do His work in the world; and it is as if He would say, 'Because the moment of your work is come I put you in possession of what is to happen, I make you anticipate and foresee it, I give you the same knowledge of it that I have myself, in order that, when suffering comes, you may not only not lose faith by the shock, but may be strengthened in your progress towards a deeper and truer faith. My ever present knowledge corresponds to my ever present Divine existence, to the fact that I am (comp. on viii. 24). Your knowledge shall be to you a proof that it is indeed One who can say "I am" that is in you.' It is not so much of faith in Him as the Messiah that Jesus speaks: it is of faith in the Divine in Him, bestowed through Him upon themselves.

Ver. 20. **Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me; and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me.** The difficulty of tracing the connection of these words with the rest of our Lord's discourse at this time has been felt by all commentators. Let us observe that they are introduced by 'Verily, verily,' and that we are thus taken back to ver. 16 with the expectation that the thought here will closely correspond, although in a deepened form, to the thought there. There, however, the distinct reference had been to that work of lowly love which 'in the form of a servant' Jesus had just performed for His disciples. What, therefore, He had done for them, they are now to do for one another, and for the world. Laying aside all thought of earthly pre-eminence, seeking only the glory of God and not their own, they are to go out, like their Master, 'in the form of a servant,' and in a spirit of self-sacrificing love like His to be His representatives to men. As they do so, they will experience the same reception as He had done. Some will 'receive' them,—that is, will not merely view with favour their general work, but will accept them when they come, and because they come, to them in the *same spirit* as that which Jesus had displayed in the act which He had

just performed towards them. Others, it is implied, will reject them; will accept indeed the outward service, the external rite; but, yielding to the evil suggestions of Satan, and so proving themselves his children instead of the children of God, will cast away from them the precious truth of which the service and the rite were only the symbolical expression. Men will thus divide themselves into two classes which will take up towards the apostles doing the work of Jesus the same position as that which the eleven on the one hand, and Judas on the other, had now taken up towards Jesus Himself. It is important to keep this thought of Judas as well as of the others prominently in view in the verses before us. Just as vers. 1 and 3 constitute a parallel to ver. 19, and there is One behind Jesus who is received when Jesus is received (ver. 20), so ver. 2 constitutes a parallel to the implied thought of Judas, and there is one behind the traitor whose children the rejectors of Jesus, as He acts in the apostles, show themselves to be. Nor is this all; for, while the thought of which we speak binds the whole passage, vers. 1-20, into one, it also explains the apparently sudden transition to the powerful emotions stirred in the Redeemer's breast by the thought of Judas at ver. 21, as well as the emphatic 'Now' of ver. 31,—now, when the last who would resist that true glory which consists in self-sacrificing love has been expelled. The last clause of ver. 20 is explained by chap. i. 12.

It is desirable to pause here for a moment, and to ask as to the real meaning of the wonderful scene, the details of which we have been considering. It is not a mere lesson of humility. The lesson is far deeper. It is the completing act of that great work of self-sacrificing love in which Jesus was engaged. He even includes in the thought of it the thought of the crucifixion now so near; and, as then He shall depart unto the Father, He affords now the most touching, the culminating, illustration of the fact that 'the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister.' That is the very essence of His glory, a glory so different from that of the world, so different even from that upon which the thoughts of His disciples were yet fixed. Therefore He humbles Himself anew. Laying aside His glory He takes up His cross, not that He may justify disciples who are already His, who are 'clean,' but that He may bring them ever and again to Himself the source of all true spiritual nourishment, and may wash away any fresh stains of defilement which they have contracted in their work in the world.

That is His part, What is ours? It springs from the consideration that, exalted in glory, He really labours and suffers no more. His disciples take His place and carry on His work, constantly leading one another back to Him, and washing away those weaknesses of faith, those defects of love, which their work in the world brings with it. Thus they 'fill up what is behind of the sufferings of Christ for His body's sake, which is the Church' (Col. i. 24); and it is thus only that, suffering with Him, they shall at last be glorified 'with Him' (ver. 8) in His glory.

CHAPTER XIII. 21-30.

*The Expulsion of Judas Iscariot.*

21 **W**HEN Jesus had thus said, he was <sup>a</sup>troubled in spirit, and testified,<sup>1</sup> and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that  
 22 <sup>b</sup>one of you shall betray me. Then <sup>c</sup>the disciples looked one  
 23 on another, doubting<sup>3</sup> of whom he spake. Now <sup>d</sup>there was  
 leaning on <sup>e</sup>Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, <sup>f</sup>whom Jesus  
 24 loved. Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him, that he  
 25 should ask who it should be of whom he spake.<sup>6</sup> He then  
 26 lying<sup>7</sup> on Jesus' breast saith unto him, Lord, who is it? Jesus  
 answered,<sup>8</sup> He it is, to <sup>9</sup>whom I shall give a <sup>10</sup>sop, 'when I  
 have dipped it.<sup>11</sup> And when <sup>12</sup>he had dipped the sop, he  
 27 gave it to Judas Iscariot, *the son* of Simon.<sup>13</sup> And after the  
 sop <sup>14</sup>Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus<sup>15</sup> unto him,  
 28 That thou doest, do quickly.<sup>16</sup> Now no man at the table  
 29 knew<sup>17</sup> for what intent he spake this <sup>18</sup>unto him. For some of  
 them <sup>19</sup>thought, because Judas had the <sup>20</sup>bag, that Jesus had <sup>21</sup>said  
 unto him, Buy *those things* that we have need of against  
 the feast; or, that he <sup>22</sup>should give something to the poor.  
 30 He then <sup>23</sup>having received the sop went immediately out:  
 and it was night.

<sup>a</sup> Chap. xi. 33.  
xii. 27.

<sup>b</sup> Comp. Matt.  
xxvi. 21;  
Mark xiv.  
18; Luke  
xxii. 21.

<sup>c</sup> Comp. Matt.  
xxvi. 22;  
Mark xiv.  
19; Luke  
xxii. 23.

<sup>d</sup> Chap. xix.  
26, xxi. 7, 20.  
<sup>e</sup> Comp. Ruth  
ii. 14; Matt.  
xxvi. 23.

<sup>f</sup> Luke xxii. 3;  
ver. 2, chap.  
vi. 70.

<sup>g</sup> Chap. xii. 6.

<sup>h</sup> Deut. xvi.  
14.

<sup>i</sup> Comp. xl. 9,  
xii. 35,  
36.

<sup>1</sup> and bare witness

<sup>2</sup> omit Then

<sup>3</sup> in perplexity

<sup>4</sup> omit Now

<sup>5</sup> reclining at meat in

<sup>6</sup> Simon Peter therefore beckoneth to this one, and saith unto him, Say who it is of whom he speaketh

<sup>7</sup> He leaning back thus

<sup>8</sup> Jesus therefore answereth

<sup>9</sup> for

<sup>10</sup> dip the

<sup>11</sup> and shall give it to him

<sup>12</sup> When therefore

<sup>13</sup> he taketh and giveth it to Judas the son of Simon Iscariot

<sup>14</sup> then Satan

<sup>15</sup> Jesus therefore saith

<sup>16</sup> more quickly

<sup>17</sup> No one of those reclining at meat perceived

<sup>18</sup> he said it

<sup>19</sup> omit of them

<sup>20</sup> omit had

<sup>21</sup> for

<sup>22</sup> therefore

CONTENTS. The leading idea of this section is the expulsion of Judas from the company of the disciples. We have already seen that before the chapter begins the world is shut out, and Jesus is to be alone with 'His own.' But Judas is of the world, the last remnant of it left in the apostolic company, the last particle, as it were, of the leaven that had to be removed with such scrupulous care from every Jewish house before the feast of the Passover. Before the true Christian Passover then can be celebrated, Judas must withdraw. Then only will the house be clean, the air be pure; and with no jarring element in their midst, Jesus will be able to pour forth all the fullness of His love towards those who are bound up with Him in the closest and most sacred fellowship.

Ver. 21. When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and bare witness, and said, Verily, verily, etc. All the expressions of the verse indicate how deeply the spirit of Jesus was moved, the 'troubled in spirit,' the 'bare witness,' the

'Verily, verily.' Compassion, however, is not the leading feature of His mind at present. It is rather horror and indignation at the thought that over against His glorious mission of love to the world there should now appear in their utmost intensity the worldliness, the selfishness, and the sin that would fain defeat it all. Therefore He was 'troubled' (comp. on xi. 33, xii. 27), and troubled 'in spirit,' in the highest region of the spiritual life. Therefore He 'bare witness,' not simply were His words plain, as compared with His previously obscure intimations of the approaching treachery (vers. 10, 18), but He was now delivering a part of that mystery of the will of His Father which it was His mission to proclaim, and which announced the thickness of satanic darkness no less than the brightness of heavenly light. And therefore also He said 'Verily, verily;' so solemn, so awful, so full of deep and far-reaching meaning, was the fact about to be realised. The same three-fold statement shows the greatness of the

impression made upon the mind of the Evangelist. — **I say unto you, That one of you shall betray me;** sad, painful words, but as yet not understood by the disciples.

Ver. 22. **The disciples looked one on another, in perplexity of whom he spake.** From the parallel passages of the earlier Gospels (Matt. xxvi. 22, etc.; Mark xiv. 19; Luke xxii. 23) we learn that they expressed their perplexity to one another in words. To John, hastening always to the main figure of the scene, it is enough to speak of their looks.

Ver. 23. **There was reclining at meat in Jesus' bosom one of his disciples.** It had been originally enjoined that the Passover should be eaten standing (Ex. xii. 11), but after the return from the captivity the custom had been changed; the guests now reclined upon couches. The reason for the original injunction no longer existing, it had been permitted to fall aside; and our Lord recognised the propriety of the change. At this moment indeed the feast, properly so called, had not yet begun; but there is no reason to doubt that the attitude of reclining would not be changed when it did so. — **Whom Jesus loved.** The universal tradition of the Church, as well as the information afforded by the gospel itself when various intimations contained in it are put together, leave no doubt that this disciple was John himself.

Ver. 24. **Simon Peter therefore beckoneth to this one, and saith unto him, Say who it is of whom he speaketh.** Peter, as usual the first to act, is the spokesman of the rest. Nothing is said to explain why either he or any other of the apostolic band should have supposed that John would know what they themselves were ignorant of. It may have arisen simply from their having witnessed many tokens of love and confidence on the part of Jesus towards him.

Ver. 25. **He leaning back thus on Jesus' breast, saith unto him, Lord, who is it?** Nothing can be more graphic than the account here given of the movement made by John. He had been reclining on the bosom of Jesus: he now throws back his head upon His breast, looking up into His face that he may ask his question. It is worthy of notice that this little act is fixed on by the beloved disciple in xxi. 20, to characterize himself: not 'which also leaned,' but 'which also leaned back on his breast' at the supper. Perhaps, too, we may justly infer that the question was neither asked nor answered in undertones, but that all could hear.

Ver. 26. **Jesus therefore answereth, He it is for whom I shall dip the sop, and shall give it to him.** The use of the definite article with the word 'sop' can leave no doubt upon our minds that it is the well-known sop of the Paschal Supper. The sauce in which it was dipped does not belong to the original institution, but had been introduced before the days of Christ, and was partaken of before the lamb was placed upon the table. At this point then we are at the beginning of the 'feast.' Two important questions meet us, In what spirit is the sop offered? Does Judas partake of it?

As to the first of these, it was certainly more than a sign to point out Judas as the traitor. This particular sign is chosen in order even at the last moment to touch his heart. For this purpose Jesus departs from the ordinary custom at the feast at which each guest dipped his own bread

in the bitter sauce, and offers Judas a piece which He Himself had dipped. It was as if He would say, 'Thou art at my table, thou art my guest, I would fain have thee to be my friend; canst thou violate every rule of love and friendship?' The giving of the sop then is more than an index to the traitor. It is a final appeal to Judas which may yet soften his heart, but which, if it do not soften him, will only make him more hardened than before.

The second question, Does Judas partake of the feast? is not distinctly answered by the Evangelist. We must probably answer in the negative, because — (1) The 'feast' was only now beginning. (2) The drift of the passage, and indeed of the whole of this section of the gospel, leads to the conclusion that he did not. This view seems also to find confirmation from the words of 1 John ii. 19, which appear to take their form from the memory of the scene before us. Thus looked at, the going out of Judas is the token that he did not belong to the number of the disciples, and that he could not share in that expression of communion with Jesus now to be enjoyed. — **When therefore he had dipped the sop, he taketh and giveth it to Judas the son of Simon Iscariot.** For the name Simon Iscariot, comp. vi. 71. That the name Iscariot belongs to the father as well as the son, confirms the idea that the meaning is the 'Man of Kerioth' (Josh. xv. 25).

Ver. 27. **And after the sop then Satan entered into him.** After the sop had been given, Satan took such full possession of the traitor, that he is no longer only Judas, but one possessed by Satan. — **Jesus therefore saith unto him, That thou doest, do more quickly.** Judas may now be addressed as 'doing' what he was to do. It was too late to expect any change. Mercy, grace, offered to the last, have been to the last rejected. The sin must be committed now. Let him therefore not stay, as in all probability he would have wished to partake of the feast; let him be even more active than he is inclined to be; Jesus not only desires to be alone with His true disciples, but He is eager to take that last step which is now at hand; He is 'straitened' until His 'baptism is accomplished' (Luke xii. 50).

Ver. 28. **No one of those reclining at meat perceived for what intent he said it unto him.** From these words the inference is generally drawn that the conversation between Jesus and John must have been in an undertone; otherwise the disciples would have known the meaning of what had been said. The inference is hardly warranted. Even although they now knew that he was to betray his Master, they might be so ignorant of all the steps he was to take for that end, that they could not attach a correct idea to the words addressed to him. And they did not.

Ver. 29. **For some thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus said unto him, Buy those things that we have need of for the feast; or, that he should give something to the poor.** On the 'bag' here spoken of, see on xii. 6. The first supposition made, that Judas might have gone out to purchase things needed 'for the feast,' is a proof that the feast itself had not begun, or was only beginning. It is important to observe the word 'feast.' It is that of ver. 1, and it shows that the disciples expected to partake of the *Paschal Supper* with Jesus. This expectation the Evangelist would in all probability not have communicated

to us as he has done had he not known it to be correct. He knows that Jesus partook of 'the feast;' that what He did not partake of was the 'Passover of the Jews' (comp. on ver. 1). The words, too, are much more reconcilable with the idea that the feast was just about to be partaken of, than that it was to be eaten twenty-four hours afterwards. On the latter supposition, the 'more quickly' loses all its meaning. On the former it retains its force. The expression here employed supplies therefore a powerful argument for the supposition that the evening on which Jesus and His disciples were thus gathered together was that of the Paschal Supper. It has indeed been urged that, if the Supper took place on the evening of the 14th,—according to sacred calculation, the beginning of the 15th,—such purchases would have been illegal and impossible, the 15th possessing all the sanctity of a Sabbath. This, however, is hardly a fair representation of the case. There are clear indications both in Scripture (Ex. xii. 16; Lev. xxiii. 7; Luke xxiii. 56) and in the Mishna, that a difference was made between these two days in respect of sanctity, the preparation of food, for example, being expressly allowed on the latter of the two. A rabbinical provision, also, for the procuring of the Paschal lamb when the eve of the Passover fell on the Sabbath, is a proof that no difficulty was experienced on the point when the two days did not coincide (Mishna, treatise Sabbath).

The second supposition of the disciples points to the same conclusion. They thought that Judas was to give something to the poor; and that it was to be given 'more quickly.' This could hardly be mere general charity to the poor. The time was not very suitable for the exercise of such charity, and there could be no call for its being given at once. We are compelled therefore to think not of charity in general, but of that particular aid which, in conformity with the law (Deut. xvi. 14), was to be given at the Passover to 'the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow,' to enable them also to rejoice. Such an interpretation of the words of Jesus on the part of the disciples corresponds much better with the supposition that the feast was about at this moment to be celebrated than that it was to be so the following night.

Ver. 30. *He therefore having received the sop went immediately out.* Again nothing is said of the sop's being eaten.—*And it was night.* It is impossible to mistake the symbolic meaning of these words, which thus become important as illustrating the general character of the thought and style of the Evangelist. They illustrate, no doubt, the minute accuracy of the narrative, and the fact that it is that of an eye-witness, upon whose memory the events witnessed by him had made a profound impression. But they certainly do more. In the darkness of the night in which Judas went out the Evangelist sees the symbol of the darkness of his deed of treachery.

## CHAPTER XIII. 31-XIV. 31.

*Jesus, alone with His Disciples, begins His Last Consolatory Discourse.*

- 31 **T**HEREFORE, when <sup>1</sup> he was gone out, Jesus said, <sup>2</sup> Now  
 32 is the Son of man <sup>a</sup> glorified, and <sup>b</sup> God is glorified in  
 33 him. 'If God be glorified in him,' God <sup>c</sup> shall also <sup>d</sup> glorify  
 34 him in himself, and <sup>e</sup> shall straightway glorify him. 'Little  
 children, yet <sup>f</sup> a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me:  
<sup>g</sup> and as <sup>h</sup> I said unto the Jews, Whither I go,' ye cannot come;  
 35 so now I say to you. A <sup>i</sup> new commandment I give unto you,  
<sup>j</sup> That ye love one another; <sup>k</sup> as <sup>l</sup> I have <sup>m</sup> loved you, that ye  
 36 also love <sup>n</sup> one another. By this shall all *men* know that ye are  
 my disciples, <sup>o</sup> if ye have love one to <sup>p</sup> another.  
 37 Simon Peter said <sup>q</sup> unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? <sup>r</sup>  
 Jesus answered him, <sup>s</sup> Whither I go,' thou canst not follow me  
 38 now; but <sup>t</sup> thou shalt follow me <sup>u</sup> afterwards. <sup>v</sup> Peter said <sup>w</sup>  
 unto him, Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? <sup>x</sup> I will lay  
 39 down my life for thy sake. <sup>y</sup> Jesus answered <sup>z</sup> him, <sup>aa</sup> Wilt  
 thou lay down thy life for my sake? <sup>ab</sup> Verily, verily, I say

<sup>a</sup> See chap. xii. 16.  
<sup>b</sup> Chap. xiv. 13, xvii. 4;  
 1 Pet. iv. 11.  
<sup>c</sup> Chap. xvii. 1, 5.  
<sup>d</sup> Chap. xii. 23.  
<sup>e</sup> 1 John ii. 1, 12, iii. 7, 18.  
<sup>f</sup> See chap. xii. 35.  
<sup>g</sup> Chap. vii. 34.  
<sup>h</sup> 1 John ii. 7, 8; 2 John 5.  
<sup>i</sup> See chap. xv. 12.  
<sup>j</sup> Eph. v. 2

<sup>k</sup> Comp. chap. xxi. 18.  
<sup>l</sup> Matt. xxvi. 33-35; Mark xiv. 29-31; Luke xxii. 33, 34.

<sup>1</sup> When therefore

<sup>2</sup> and God

<sup>3</sup> omit have

<sup>4</sup> omit him

<sup>5</sup> answereth

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<sup>6</sup> saith

<sup>7</sup> omit also

<sup>8</sup> may love

<sup>9</sup> omit me

<sup>10</sup> for me

11

<sup>12</sup> omit If God be glorified in him

<sup>13</sup> even as

<sup>14</sup> disciples of mine

<sup>15</sup> even now

<sup>16</sup> add away

<sup>17</sup> with

<sup>18</sup> for thee



unto thee, The cock shali not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice.

- CHAP. XIV. 1. Let <sup>a</sup> not your heart be <sup>b</sup> troubled: ye <sup>18</sup> believe <sup>a</sup> Ver. 27.  
2 in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many <sup>a</sup> Comp. chap.  
mansions: <sup>19</sup> if *it were* not so, I would have told you. <sup>20</sup> I <sup>21</sup> go <sup>a</sup> Chap. xii. 17  
3 <sup>c</sup> to prepare a place for you. And if I go <sup>22</sup> and prepare <sup>23</sup> a <sup>a</sup> Chap. xii. 44  
place for you, <sup>d</sup> I will <sup>24</sup> come again, and receive <sup>25</sup> you unto <sup>a</sup> Chap. xiii.  
4 myself; that <sup>e</sup> where I am, *there* ye may be also. <sup>26</sup> And whither <sup>a</sup> Vers. 28, 29.  
I go <sup>27</sup> ye know, and <sup>28</sup> the way ye know. <sup>a</sup> See chap.  
5 <sup>f</sup> Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou <sup>a</sup> Chap. xi. 16.  
6 goest; <sup>27</sup> and <sup>28</sup> how can <sup>29</sup> we know the way? Jesus saith unto  
him, I am <sup>g</sup> the way, the <sup>31</sup> truth, and the <sup>h</sup> life: no man <sup>32</sup>  
7 cometh unto the Father, but by <sup>33</sup> me. <sup>i</sup> If ye had known <sup>34</sup> me,  
ye should have known <sup>35</sup> my Father also: and <sup>36</sup> from henceforth  
<sup>j</sup> ye know <sup>36</sup> him, and have seen him.  
8 <sup>k</sup> Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it suf-  
9 ficient us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with  
you, and yet hast thou not known <sup>34</sup> me, Philip? <sup>l</sup> he that hath  
seen me hath seen the Father; and <sup>36</sup> how sayest thou *then*, <sup>37</sup>  
10 Shew us the Father? Believest thou not that <sup>m</sup> I am in the  
Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak <sup>38</sup> unto  
you <sup>n</sup> I speak not of <sup>39</sup> myself: but the Father that dwelleth  
11 in me, he doeth the works. <sup>40</sup> Believe me that I *am* in the  
Father, and the Father in me: or <sup>o</sup> else believe me for the  
very <sup>41</sup> works' sake.  
12 <sup>p</sup> Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on <sup>42</sup> me,  
the works that I do shall he do also; <sup>43</sup> and greater *works* than  
13 these shall he do; because <sup>q</sup> I go unto my <sup>44</sup> Father. And <sup>r</sup> what-  
soever ye shall <sup>45</sup> ask in my name, that will I do, <sup>46</sup> that <sup>s</sup> the  
14 Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask <sup>47</sup> any thing  
15 in my name, I will do *it*. <sup>48</sup> <sup>t</sup> If ye love me, keep <sup>49</sup> my command-  
16 ments. And I will pray <sup>50</sup> the Father, and he shall <sup>51</sup> give you  
another <sup>u</sup> Comforter, <sup>51</sup> that he may abide <sup>52</sup> with you for ever;  
17 *Even* <sup>v</sup> the Spirit of <sup>53</sup> truth; <sup>w</sup> whom the world cannot receive,  
because it seeth <sup>54</sup> him not, neither knoweth <sup>55</sup> him: but <sup>56</sup> ye  
know <sup>57</sup> him: for he dwelleth <sup>58</sup> with you, and shall be <sup>59</sup> in you.

- |   |                       |                     |                 |
|---|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| 18 omit ye                                      | 19 places of abode    | 20 you;             | 21 because I    |
| 22 shall have gone                              | 23 prepared           | 24 omit will        | 25 will receive |
| 26 there ye also may be                         | 27 add away           | 28 omit and         | 29 omit ye know |
| 30 do   | 31 and the            | 32 no one           | 33 through      |
| 34 learned to know                              | 35 ye would know      | 36 ye learn to know | 37 from         |
| 37 omit then                                    | 38 say                | 39 believe for his  | 40 omit shall   |
| 40 but the Father abiding in me doeth his works | 41 also do            | 42 the              | 43 ask          |
| 44 this I will do                               | 45 ask of me          | 46 ye will keep     | 47 of the       |
| 48 will   | 49 Advocate           | 50 be               | 51 omit but     |
| 52 beholdeth                                    | 53 learneth to know,  | 54 and is           |                 |
| 55 learn to know                                | 56 because he abideth |                     |                 |

- 18 I will not leave you comfortless:<sup>60</sup> <sup>a</sup> I will<sup>61</sup> come to you. Yet <sup>a</sup> Ver. 3.  
 19 <sup>a</sup> a little while, and the world seeth<sup>64</sup> me no more; <sup>62</sup> but <sup>a</sup> ye <sup>a</sup> See chap.  
 20 see<sup>63</sup> me: because I live, ye<sup>64</sup> shall live also.<sup>65</sup> At<sup>66</sup> that <sup>a</sup> day <sup>a</sup> Chap. xvi.  
     ye shall know that <sup>a</sup> I *am* in my Father, and ye in me, and I in <sup>a</sup> Chap. xvi.  
 21 you. <sup>a</sup> He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he <sup>a</sup> Ver. 10.  
     it is that loveth me: and <sup>a</sup> he that loveth me shall be loved of <sup>a</sup> Chap. xvi.  
     my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him. <sup>a</sup> 27.  
 22 <sup>a</sup> Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it <sup>67</sup> that thou <sup>a</sup> Luke vi. 16.  
 23 wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world? Jesus  
     answered and said unto him, <sup>a</sup> If a man<sup>68</sup> love me, he will keep  
     my words:<sup>69</sup> and my Father will love him, and <sup>a</sup> we will come <sup>a</sup> Rev. iii. 20.  
 24 unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loveth me  
     not keepeth not my sayings:<sup>70</sup> and <sup>a</sup> the word which ye hear is <sup>a</sup> Ver. 10;  
     not mine, but the Father's which sent me. <sup>a</sup> chap. v. 19,  
     vii. 16.  
 25 These things have I spoken unto you, being *yet* present<sup>71</sup>  
 26 with you. But the <sup>a</sup> Comforter, *which* is the Holy Ghost,<sup>72</sup> <sup>a</sup> Ver. 16.  
     whom the Father will send in my name, <sup>a</sup> he shall<sup>73</sup> teach you <sup>a</sup> Chap. xvi.  
     all things, and <sup>a</sup> bring all things<sup>74</sup> to your remembrance, what- <sup>a</sup> 13; 1 John  
 27 soever<sup>75</sup> I have<sup>76</sup> said unto you. <sup>a</sup> Peace I leave with<sup>77</sup> you, my <sup>a</sup> 11. 20, 27.  
     peace<sup>78</sup> I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto <sup>a</sup> Chap. xii. 16.  
     you. <sup>a</sup> Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. <sup>a</sup> Chap. xvi.  
 28 Ye have<sup>76</sup> heard how<sup>79</sup> <sup>a</sup> I said unto you, I go away, and come <sup>a</sup> 33; Col. iii.  
     *again* unto<sup>80</sup> you. If ye loved me, ye would rejoice,<sup>81</sup> because <sup>a</sup> 15. See  
     I said<sup>82</sup> <sup>a</sup> I <sup>a</sup> go unto the Father: for<sup>84</sup> my<sup>85</sup> Father is greater than <sup>a</sup> chap. xx. 19.  
     I. And now <sup>a</sup> I have told you before it come to pass, that, when <sup>a</sup> Ver. 1.  
 30 it is come to pass, ye might<sup>86</sup> believe. Hereafter<sup>87</sup> I will not <sup>a</sup> Vers. 2, 3, 4-  
     talk much with you: for the <sup>a</sup> prince of this<sup>89</sup> world cometh, <sup>a</sup> 18.  
 31 and<sup>90</sup> hath nothing in me. But<sup>91</sup> that the <sup>a</sup> world may know<sup>92</sup> <sup>a</sup> Ver. 12.  
     that I love the Father; and <sup>a</sup> as<sup>93</sup> the Father gave me com- <sup>a</sup> Chap. xiii.  
     mandment, even<sup>94</sup> so I do. Arise, let us go hence. <sup>a</sup> 19, xvi. 4-  
     <sup>a</sup> See chap.  
     xii. 31.  
     <sup>a</sup> Chap. xvii.  
     23.  
     <sup>a</sup> Chap. xii. 49.

<sup>60</sup> desolate	<sup>61</sup> omit will	<sup>62</sup> no longer	<sup>63</sup> behold
<sup>64</sup> and ye	<sup>65</sup> omit also	<sup>66</sup> In	
<sup>67</sup> how hath it come to pass	<sup>68</sup> any one	<sup>69</sup> word	<sup>70</sup> words
<sup>71</sup> while abiding	<sup>72</sup> But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit		
<sup>73</sup> will	<sup>74</sup> and he will bring	<sup>75</sup> all things that	
<sup>76</sup> omit have	<sup>77</sup> unto	<sup>78</sup> a peace that is mine	
<sup>79</sup> that	<sup>80</sup> and I come unto	<sup>81</sup> would have rejoiced	
<sup>82</sup> that	<sup>83</sup> omit I said	<sup>84</sup> because	<sup>85</sup> the
<sup>86</sup> may	<sup>87</sup> omit Hereafter	<sup>88</sup> no longer	<sup>89</sup> the
<sup>90</sup> cometh. And he	<sup>91</sup> But <i>he</i> cometh	<sup>92</sup> perceive	
<sup>93</sup> and that even as	<sup>94</sup> omit even		

CONTENTS. Judas has now gone out; Jesus is alone with the disciples whom He loved; and the last disturbing element has been removed from the midst of the little company. But the hour is come when the servants must be left without the immediate presence of their Master, and when they are to take that place, amidst the trials of the world, which He was about to leave for the immediate presence of the Father. It is the moment, therefore, for the Redeemer to pour forth all the

inmost feelings of His soul on their behalf; and He does this in the discourse extending to the close of chap. xvi., and in the intercessory prayer of chap. xvii. We shall mistake the object of these chapters, however, if we suppose that they are intended mainly to console: they are still more to instruct and train those by whom the work of Christ in the world is to be carried on. The subordinate parts of the section before us are—(1) chap. xiii. 31-35; (2) vers. 36-38; (3) chap.

xiv. 1-4; (4) vers. 5-7; (5) vers. 8-11; (6) vers. 12-21; (7) vers. 22-24; (8) vers. 25-31.

Vers. 31, 32. **When therefore he was gone out, Jesus saith, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him; and God shall glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him.** In the going out of Judas Jesus sees the disappearance of the last trace of the world from His presence. It is the token to Him, therefore, that the struggle is past, that the victory is won, that the moment of His glorification has arrived. To the eye of sense, indeed, it seems as if at that instant the powers of darkness triumphed. But that was only the outward aspect of the events now to be consummated. We are on the verge of the 'lifting on high;' and in what the world thinks shame there really begins the brightest manifestation of the 'glory,' both of the Son and of the Father. Hence the emphatic 'Now' with which Jesus introduces His words. The 'glorifying' spoken of in the first two sentences is not to be distinguished from that of the last two, as if the former were the glory of suffering by which Jesus glorified the Father, the latter that of reward by which the Father glorified Him. It is throughout the same glory that is in view, and that not an outward but an inward glory; although the word 'glorify' implies that what had been for a time veiled, obscured, is now made manifest in the brightness which is its true and proper characteristic. The glory spoken of is that of Sonship, the glory belonging to the Son as the absolutely perfect expression of the Father, and especially of that love of the Father which is the essential element of the Father's being. This expression had been found in the Son, not only throughout the eternity preceding the foundation of the world, but also after He became Son of man; and it is to be particularly observed that it is of the glorifying of the 'Son of man' that Jesus speaks in the words before us. His life on earth, not less than His previous life in heaven, had been the manifestation of the Father's love. But its 'glory' had not been seen. The world's idea of glory was altogether different; it had misunderstood and persecuted, and was about to crucify, Him whose life of lowly and self-denying service in love had been the highest and most glorious expression of the love of God to sinful men. This had been the cloud obscuring the 'glory.' But 'now,' when the struggle was over,—when, notwithstanding all appearances to the contrary, the 'lifting on high out of the earth' (comp. on chap. xii. 32), the resurrection, the ascension, and the bestowal of the Spirit established the triumph of Jesus,—the cloud was rolled away, and the glory always in Him, but hidden for a time, was to shine forth with an effulgence that all, though some unwillingly, should own. In this respect the 'Son of man' is 'now glorified.' Thus, also, 'God is glorified in Him;' because it is seen that even all the humiliation and sufferings of His earthly state, flowing as they did from love, the expression as they were of love, are the manifestation of the love of God. Nor is this all, for 'God shall glorify Him in Himself;' that is, shall bring out before the whole universe of being that the lowly, the crucified, Son of man is 'in Himself,' one with Him, His Beloved in whom His soul is well pleased (Isa. xlii. 1; Matt. xii. 18). Finally, God will do this 'straightway,' for the moment of death, of resurrection, and of all that followed, is

at hand. Can we fail to understand the triumphant 'Now' of Jesus at the very instant when Judas was on his way to complete his treachery? But if there be triumph for Himself, what of His disciples?

Ver. 33. **Little children, yet a little while I am with you.** For them there is separation from Him, and the thought of its nearness lends more than ordinary tenderness to the words of Jesus. He calls them 'little children,' a term found nowhere in the New Testament, except here and in the First Epistle of John (chap. ii. 1, 12, 28, iii. 7, 18, iv. 4, v. 21); for the more probable reading of Gal. iv. 19 is simply 'children.'—**Ye shall seek me; and even as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go away, ye cannot come; so now I say to you.** These words had been spoken to the Jews at chaps. vii. 34, viii. 21. It is remarkable that, formerly addressed to determined enemies, they should now be addressed to beloved disciples. Yet we are probably to seek for no other basis of the common thought than this, that the 'going away' of Jesus involved His separation from the community of human life, from friends therefore no less than foes. The desolate state in which the disciples would thus be left, and, not less than this, the greater responsibility that would then rest upon them to carry out the work of Jesus, prepare the way for the words that follow.

Ver. 34. **A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; even as I loved you that ye also may love one another.** The new commandment is love, such love as Jesus had Himself exhibited, and as had been His 'glory' (ver. 31); and this love to one another they would need, that in an evil world they might be to one another sources of strength and comfort. It is again the lesson of the foot-washing; though here it appears not so much in the form of general love to all men as of that specific love which can only be exercised towards the members of the body of Christ. By 'commandment' is meant not a definite precept, but rather a sphere of life in which the disciples are to walk (chaps. x. 18, xii. 50); and it is this, rather than the character or quality of the love, that makes the commandment 'new.' The whole life of Jesus had been love; the life of His disciples, as that of those in Him, was to be love also. There was to be a transition in them from the outward to the inward, from the letter of an injunction to its felt experience. Hence the first half of the verse is complete in itself; and the second half points out the ground upon which this love was to rest, and the means by which it was to be obtained. It was the very purpose of the love of Jesus that He might form a community all whose members, born again into His love, might love one another,—'Even as I loved you, that ye also may love one another.' Out of Him is selfishness; in Him, and in Him alone, we love.

Ver. 35. **By this shall all men know that ye are disciples of mine, if ye have love one with another.** The expression 'disciples of mine' is worthy of notice. It seems to show that the meaning is not exhausted by the thought of that language so often quoted in connection with it, 'Behold how these Christians love one another.' It directs our thoughts, not to the disciples only, but to Jesus Himself. He was love: in the love of the Christian community, the love of its members 'with' one another, it was to be seen not merely what they were, but what He was, and

more particularly that He was love. Thus, then, the disciples have their great charge committed to them,—to be in the season now at hand what He had been who had washed their feet.

Ver. 36. **Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, whither goest thou away? Jesus answered, Whither I go away, thou canst not follow me now, but thou shalt follow afterwards.** Peter has not been able to apprehend aright the truths of which Jesus has been speaking. We need not wonder at it; and, had he understood them fully, there would have been less necessity either for the instructions that follow or for the discipline of his fall. As it is, thinking only of himself and his fellow-disciples, failing to see the greatness of the charge that would be committed to them when Jesus went away, and not yet trained as he will be, he turns to the thought of the separation spoken of in ver. 33, and asks whether his Lord goeth. No direct answer is given to the question. Peter must have known his work and done it before he could have properly comprehended the answer, had it been given; for a disciple's reward stands in such a relation to his work, that without a knowledge of the latter he can have no true knowledge of the former. Therefore it is that he is told that the time is not come for his following his Lord. He shall follow Him afterwards; follow Him in shame, in humiliation, to the cross, to the life beyond the grave: then shall he know.

Ver. 37. **Peter saith unto him, Lord, why cannot I follow thee even now? I will lay down my life for thee.** Peter sees that in the words, 'Thou canst not follow me now,' there lies the meaning that he is not yet morally prepared for following Jesus. His self-confidence is hurt by the suggestion; and not in devotion only, but in too high an estimate of his own readiness to meet every trial for the sake of the Master whom he loved, he cries out that he is ready to follow Him 'even now,'—nay, that he is ready to lay down his life for Him. Such want of self-knowledge must be corrected.

Ver. 38. **Jesus answereth, Wilt thou lay down thy life for me? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow till thou hast denied me thrice.** For a similar repetition of Peter's own words in the answer of Jesus, comp. chap. xxi. 17 and the commentary. The words of Jesus fix with solemn emphasis His disciple's attention on what He Himself had said.

Before we pass on, it may be well to ask at what point in these chapters we are to place the institution of the Supper. The point has been very variously fixed: at the beginning of chap. xiii., at the end of chap. xiv., at the end of chap. xiii., between vers. 30 and 31, vers. 32 and 33, in the midst of ver. 34 of the present chapter. But these suppositions are attended with more or less improbability. We have already seen (in ver. 26) that 'the feast,' with the institution of which the Supper was most closely connected, was then beginning; but that there is reason to think that Judas did not actually partake of it. If so, the natural inference is that it was completed between vers. 30 and 31, immediately after the traitor had gone out. The objection to this view, that the words of ver. 31 follow too closely upon ver. 30 to permit us to think that time was occupied between the two verses, is less weighty than at first appears. The words would follow with great appropriateness the giving of the cup which was the 'new covenant

in the blood of Jesus'; and the word 'therefore' of ver. 31 does not necessarily imply that Jesus spoke at that moment, but only that the thoughts awakened by the departure of Judas must have remained in all their freshness when ver. 31 was uttered. This they would do even although the giving of the cup intervened, because that cup expressed in the most solemn form the exclusive intimacy of communion which now existed between Jesus and His disciples, and the existence of which is presupposed in vers. 34, 35, and 36. If this explanation is not accepted, there seems no valid reason why the institution should not be placed between vers. 35 and 36. The latter of these need not follow the former at once. The words 'I go away' (ver. 33), once uttered, would linger in the minds of those present as the one thought demanding explanation; and 'This do in remembrance of me,' would deepen it.

CHAP. XIV. ver. 1. **Let not your heart be troubled: believe in God, believe also in me.** No separation ought to be made between this chapter and the last section of chap. xiii., for the place, the circumstances, and the object of the discourse here entered on are the same as there. The dominating thought of all is that of chap. xiii. 31,—that the time is come when a full revelation is to be made of the 'glory' of the Son of man in the Father, and of the Father in Him; when it shall be seen that the 'going away' of Jesus to the Father not only contains in it what swallows up all the humiliation of His earthly lot, but is the great proof and illustration of that union of Himself with the Father in love, the manifestation of which 'glorifies' both the Father and the Son. To such a manifestation, then, it is evident that the 'going away' of Jesus was necessary: He must in His earthly form be separated from His disciples, that His glory may be revealed not only to those who had the spiritual eye, but to the world (chaps. xvi. 10, xvii. 21). While however separation must thus take place, it is, on the other hand, the object of our Lord to show that it was really no separation,—that He does not 'go away' in the carnal sense understood by Peter in chap. xiii. 36, but will ever be with His disciples in an abiding union and communion of spirit (comp. the interesting parallel in chap. xx. 17).

The 'trouble' spoken of in the words now before us is not that of mere sorrow; it is rather that which Jesus had Himself experienced (see chap. xii. 27) when the prospect of His sufferings rose immediately before Him. It is 'trouble' from the opposition of the world while they carry on their work of love; but 'trouble' which at the same time passes into the heart, and leads to the conflict of all those feelings of anxiety, perplexity, fear, and sorrow, which make the heart like a 'troubled sea' that the Divine voice 'Peace, be still!' alone can calm. The work of the disciples, committed to them as it had been to their Master (chap. xvii. 18), will bring with it this 'trouble'; yet they have enough to keep them calm with His own calmness (ver. 27), enough to lead them to say with Him, 'But for this cause came I unto this hour' (chap. xii. 27).—The foundation of all peace comes first, and the word 'believe' must be taken in the same way in both clauses of the statement. To understand it differently in the two would give, either to faith in God or to faith in Jesus, an independent existence inconsistent with the general

teaching of this Gospel. We must, therefore, either translate, 'Ye believe in God, ye believe also in me,' or, 'Believe in God, believe also in me;' the hortatory form of 'Let not your heart be troubled' and of the whole discourse makes the latter probable. Yet, as the disciples already believed, the exhortation must have reference not to the formation, but to the deepening and constant exercise of that faith, the object of which is really one—God in Jesus. Thus also we may understand why faith in God is mentioned first, and not second, as in chap. xii. 44. It is the highest act of faith that is referred to,—faith, no doubt, in God through Jesus, but faith in Him as the ultimate Guide of all that happens. It is the evolution of the Divine plan that they have to do with; therefore let them believe in 'God.' In addition to this, we may call to mind that God Himself was the Fountain of that Messianic hope of which, by the departure of Jesus, the disciples would think themselves deprived. At the same time, it is to be observed that the order of the words in the two clauses is different, 'God' following, but 'me' preceding, its verb. The effect is to bring 'in God' and 'in me' into the closest possible connection.

Ver. 2. **In my Father's house are many places of abode: if it were not so, I would have told you; because I go to prepare a place for you.** All the substantives here used—'house,' 'places of abode,' 'place'—are full of meaning. The first is not the material building, but the building as occupied by its inmates (comp. chaps. ii. 16, xi. 20, with iv. 53, viii. 35, xi. 31); the second, used in the New Testament only in this verse and in ver. 23, is connected with the characteristic 'abide' of our Gospel; and the third embodies the idea of something fixed and definite—something that we may call our own (comp. chap. xi. 48). But the full force and beauty of the words are only understood by us when we look at them in a light different from that in which they are generally regarded. For 'my Father's house' does not mean heaven as distinguished from earth, nor are the 'abiding places' confined to the world to come. Earth as well as heaven is to the eye of faith a part of that 'house': 'abiding places' are here as well as there. The universe, in short, is presented to us by our Lord as one 'house' over which the Father rules, having 'many' apartments, some on this side, others on the other side, the grave. In one of these the believer dwells now, and the Father and the Son come unto him, and make their abode with him (ver. 23): in another of them he will dwell hereafter. When, therefore, Jesus 'goes away,' it is not to a strange land, it is only to another chamber of the one house of the Father: and thus 'many' is not to be understood in the sense of variety,—of different degrees of happiness and glory provided for different persons. The main thought is that wherever Jesus is, wherever we are, we are all in the Father's house: surely such separation is no real separation. Had not this been the true nature of the case,—had it not been essentially involved in the mission of Jesus that His disciples, once united to Him, could never be separated from Him, He would 'have told' them, His teaching would have been entirely different from what it had been; but, because wherever He was there He would prepare a place for them also, He had not thought it necessary till now to speak

either of being separated or of being united again. It will thus be seen that the words beginning with 'because' are to be connected with those going immediately before, and not with the earlier part of the verse.

Ver. 3. **And if I shall have gone and prepared a place for you, I come again, and will receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye also may be.** All that has preceded these words has rested upon the idea that, although Jesus is now 'going away' to the Father, He is not really forsaking His disciples. Even when in one sense separated from them, in another He will still be with them; and this latter presence will in due time, when they like Him have accomplished their work, be followed by their receiving again that joy of His immediate presence which they are now to lose. This double thought seems to explain the remarkable use of two different tenses of the verb in the second clause of the verse,—'I come,' 'I will receive.' 'He is' wherever His people are: they 'shall be,' when their toils are over, wherever He is (comp. chap. xii. 26). The Second Coming of the Lord is not, therefore, resolved by these words into a merely spiritual presence in which He shall be always with His people. The true light in which to look at that great fact is as the *manifestation* of a presence never far away from us (comp. ver. 18). Our Lord is always with us, though (as we have yet to see) it is in the power of the Spirit that He is so now. He will again Himself, in His own person, be with us, and we with Him, when our work is 'finished.'

Observe also the change of order in the original in the case of the words 'I am' and 'ye may be,' the effect being to bring the 'I' and the 'ye' into the closest juxtaposition (comp. on ver. 1).

Ver. 4. **And whither I go away ye know the way.** These words convey to the disciples the assurance that they already had the pledge and earnest of all that Jesus had spoken of; for their interpretation depends on the same principle as that formerly applied at chap. iv. 32. To 'know' is not merely to know of; it is to have inward experience of. As, therefore, 'whither I go' is the Father's presence; as Jesus is the way to the Father; and as they have experimental knowledge of Him, they 'know the way.' They might have feared that it was not so, that they had still much to be taught before they could anticipate with confidence the possession of their hope; and who was to teach them now? But Jesus says, 'Ye know me; and, in knowing me, ye know the way; it is already yours.' Difficulties arise in their minds, the first of which is started by Thomas, and has reference to the way to the goal.

Ver. 5. **Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest away: how do we know the way?** In ver. 4, Jesus had spoken of 'going away,'—not of 'going,' as in ver. 3. The idea of separation is thus again brought prominently forward, and Thomas is overcome by the thought of it (comp. chap. xi. 16). His discouragement, which blinds his eyes, is uttered in the words before us.

Ver. 6. **Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no one cometh unto the Father but through me.** The three terms here used must not be taken as expressing three independent thoughts; still less can we fuse them into one, as if the meaning were, 'I am the true way of life.' It is evident, both from what pre-

cedes and from what follows, that the emphasis is on 'way,' and that the two other terms are in some sense additional and explicative. But in what sense? Let us notice that the thought of the Father is the leading thought of the previous verses of the chapter, and that in ver. 7 the knowledge of the Father is the great end to be attained; let us further observe that 'truth' and 'life' are precisely the two constituent elements of that knowledge, the one that upon which it rests, the other that in which it issues; and we shall see that Jesus adds these two designations of Himself to the first, because they express the contents, the substance, of that in which the 'way' consists. The Father is 'the truth,' 'the life': Jesus is the revelation of these to men: because He is so He is 'the way'; and because He only is so, He is the only way to the Father. We must beware, however, of the supposition that the 'life' thus spoken of is only life to us in a future world. It is life now in that ever-ascending cycle of experience in which the believer passes from one stage to another of 'truth,' and thus from one stage to another of corresponding 'life.' In the present 'way' we have present 'truth' and present 'life'; and each fresh appropriation of the truth deepens that communion by which the life is conditioned. It may be well to notice, too, that the prominence here given to the mention of the 'way' arises from that thought of *separation* with which the minds of the disciples were filled. Jesus had said to them, 'I must go away,' and it seemed to them as if in the language a journey were involved, which would separate them from their Lord. Therefore with loving condescension the figure is taken up, and they are assured that He is Himself, if we may so speak, this very distance to be traversed. Is it a 'way' that they have to travel? Then He is 'the way,' and all along its course they shall be still with Him. Hence also the following verse.

Ver. 7. **If ye had learned to know me, ye would know my Father also.** The change in this verse from 'the Father' of ver. 6 to 'my Father,' as well as the use in the original of two different verbs for 'know,' is peculiarly instructive. The meaning seems to be, that when we have gained a knowledge of the Son, we find ourselves possessed of a knowledge of His Father; then, in that knowledge, the veil which hides from us in our natural condition the true knowledge of God is withdrawn, and we possess the highest knowledge of all, the knowledge of God in the deepest verity of His being, the knowledge of 'the Father.' It is true that we immediately read, **From henceforth ye learn to know Him, and have seen Him.** But we must bear in mind that possession of a *perfect* knowledge of God is never reached by us. Each stage of 'knowing' is but the beginning of a new stage of 'learning to know' more; 'forgetting the things that are behind,' we start ever afresh towards a knowledge of 'the Father,' always increasing but never consummated. The same remark applies to 'have seen,' by which we are to understand 'have begun to see.' This knowledge, this sight, the disciples have 'from henceforth.' The point of time is not Pentecost anticipated. It dates from the great 'Now' of chap. xiii. 31, and the explanation is to be found in the peculiar circumstances in which the disciples have been placed since then. They have been separated from all worldly thoughts of Jesus; His true

'glory' and the true glory of the Father in Him have been revealed in all their brightness; and in an intimacy of communion with their Lord never enjoyed before they 'learn to know' with an inward spiritual discernment, they 'have seen' with a sharpness of spiritual intuition, not previously possessed by them. Another difficulty arises in the breast of Philip.

Ver. 8. **Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us.** The same bluntness of spiritual sight (that is, really the same weakness of faith) that had been exhibited by Thomas is now exhibited by Philip, though in relation to another point. Jesus had said (ver. 7) that the disciples had seen the Father, meaning that they had seen the Father in Him. Philip fails to understand; and, thinking perhaps of the revelation given to Moses in Ex. xxxiii. 18, 19, misusing also those words of our Lord which alone made his request possible, he asks that he and his fellow-disciples may have granted them some actual vision of the Father (comp. his spirit in chap. vi. 7). The reply of Jesus, vers. 9-21, falls into three leading parts, of which the first is found in vers. 9-11.

Ver. 9. **Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not learned to know me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father: how sayest thou, Show us the Father? 'Have I been with you,' literally, 'Am I with you,' the very words of ver. 3. The words are those of astonishment and sorrow that the effect of all this spiritual intercourse has failed; and the declaration of Jesus in the latter half of the verse rests upon the fact that He is the complete expression of the Father (comp. chap. i. 18). He does not say 'my Father' but 'the Father,' because He speaks not of the personal relation between the Father and Himself, but of the light in which God is revealed as Father to all who learn to know Him in the Son.**

Ver. 10. **Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I say unto you I speak not from myself, but the Father abiding in me doeth his works.** If what is stated in the first clause of this verse be the fact, the bluntness of Philip's spiritual vision will be proved. It is of this truth, therefore, that Jesus speaks. The statement is that of one great truth with two sides, each of which has its appropriate proof—the first, in the 'words' of Jesus; the second, in the Father's 'works.' For, as to the first, that Jesus is 'in the Father,' He is the Word, and words characterize Him. If His words are not 'from Himself,' He is not from Himself; if they are the Father's, He is 'in the Father.' As to the second, the Father does not work directly, He works only through the Son; therefore as the Father He can be known only in the Son. Thus the Son is *in* the Father; He *is* in no other way; the Father is *in* the Son; He *is* the Father in no other way. Hence the proof of the statement to Philip, 'He that hath seen me hath seen the Father,' is complete. The distinction between 'words' and 'works' in this verse thus springs from a point of view wholly different from that which refers the one to the teaching, the other to the miracles, of Jesus; it is connected with the essential qualities of that Son who is the Word, of that God who is the Father. The transition from the 'words' to the 'works,' otherwise so inexplicable, is also thus at once explained. This is the only passage

of the Gospel in which the verb 'say' is connected with the 'words' or with the 'word' of Jesus. 'The words that I say unto you' are equivalent to 'My words.'

Ver. 11. **Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe for his works' sake.** Jesus has established the proposition by which He would show Philip the impropriety of his request. He now calls upon him, and upon the other disciples through him, to receive it. First, they ought to do this upon the authority of His own statement, the statement of One who is in the Father; but, if that be not enough, then upon the authority of the Father's works in Him. By these last we are certainly not to understand miracles alone. Miracles are, no doubt, included, although not simply as works of supernatural power. All the works of the Father in the Son are meant, all bearing on them those tokens of the Father which appeal to the heart, and ought to satisfy men that, in doing them, Jesus reveals not Himself but the Father. The second part of the reply follows in vers. 12-14.

Ver. 12. **Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth in me, the works that I do shall he also do; and greater works than these shall he do, because I go unto the Father.** It seemed to the disciples that, by the departure of Jesus, all the glorious manifestations of the Divine which they had beheld in Him would be brought to an end. So far is this from being the case that these shall not only continue but become even more glorious than before. By 'works' we are obviously to understand something wider than miracles, for the promise is to all believers, and it cannot be said that they in any age have wrought greater miracles than their Lord. What Jesus speaks of is the general power of the spiritual life, not only as it exists in the breast of the believer, but as it shows itself in all life and action corresponding to its nature. What He had been and had done was to be exhibited in the disciples themselves. They were to be put into His position, to take His place, to be sustained in all inward strength and outward manifestation as He had been. Nay more, He was going to the Father, —not the verb of chaps. xiii. 33, 36, xiv. 4, 5, but another, suggesting less the thought of what He was leaving than the thought of what He was going to; and He was going to 'the' Father, not His own Father only, but One who stood in the same relation to all the members of His body. Therefore what He had been and had done would be still more gloriously unfolded in them than it had been as yet in Him. When He went to the Father, His life would be set free from the struggles and sufferings by which its power and glory had been obscured on earth. But His disciples were one with Him, and what He was they should be. They are the organs not of a humbled only but of an ascended Lord; and through what He is at the right hand of the Father they shall do 'greater works' than He did in the world. The same great truth is expressed in 1 John iv. 17, 'Because as He is' (not *was*), 'so are we in this world.' How little do Christians realise their position and their privileges!

Vers. 13, 14. **And whatsoever ye ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask of me any thing in my name, this I will do.** The twice

repeated 'this I will do' of these verses, is the taking up again of the 'do' of ver. 12; so that what Jesus says is, that He in His glorified condition, being the believer's strength for what he does, will be the real doer both of the 'works' and of the 'greater works' done by him.

The condition on our part of the accomplishment of this promise is prayer. (1) Prayer in the name of Jesus, the words 'in my name' occurring in both these verses. This expression is connected not only with our asking, but, in ver. 26, with the Father's sending; and that the order as well as the contents of the thought is to be observed, is made clear by the fact that in the later part of the discourse the same order is observed (comp. chaps. xv. 16 and xvi. 23). The 'name' spoken of is in the first place the name of 'Son'; as we shall find that in chap. xvii. the 'name' of God spoken of is in the first place that of 'Father.' But the thought is not to be confined to this. When we bring all the passages together in which the words occur in chaps. xiv.-xvii., and particularly the verse before us and chap. xvii. 11, 12 ('Thy name which thou hast given me'), it becomes clear that we must extend the meaning of 'name' so as to include the revelation of what the Father is in the Son. To ask 'in the name of' the Son of man, therefore, is to ask in a confidence and hope which have their essence and ground in the revelation of the Son. It is not so much asking 'for the sake of Christ,' or 'in Christ,' as asking because we know the Father in the Son, and have learned to cast ourselves, as sons, upon the revelation thus given us. (2) Prayer to the Son as well as to the Father; yet not to Jesus regarded as an independent personality, but to Him as the Son, so that in praying to Him we pray at the same time to the Father, for only in the Father do we know the Son. Hence also the 'whatsoever' of ver. 13, and the 'anything' of ver. 14, have in this their necessary limitations. Believers are not viewed here simply as members of the human family in the midst of the weaknesses, perplexities, and sorrows of humanity. They possess the spirit, they aim at the aims, of Jesus. They pray with the mind of the Son, which is the mind of the Father, and in that sphere alone can they be assured that whatever they ask shall be done for them and through them, 'that the Father may be glorified in the Son.' Only by the explanation thus offered does it seem possible to account for the insertion of 'me' in ver. 14; and the whole statement may be regarded as a realisation of chap. i. 51, even the very same order of thought being there observed, the 'ascending' preceding the 'descending' of angels upon the Son of man. The third part of the reply to Philip follows in vers. 15-21.

Ver. 15. **If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments.** An abiding communion between the glorified Redeemer and His disciples on earth has been spoken of as established,—a communion, as we have already seen, not to be broken by the 'going away' of Jesus to the Father. The object of the present verse (which is no interruption of the discourse by a direct precept) is to point out the condition by which alone this communion can be preserved and its greatest blessing, the presence of the Advocate, enjoyed—love. This love, too, consists in a loving self-surrender of ourselves to the sole object of glorifying the Father, analogous to the loving self-surrender of Jesus; for 'my commandments' are not merely commandments

which He gives, but which He has Himself first received and made His own (comp. ver. 27).

Ver. 16. **And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, that he may be with you for ever.** The word here translated in our English Version 'Comforter,' and partially introduced into the English language as 'Paraclete,' means properly, One called to stand by us for our help, our Advocate, Helper, Representative. 'Comforter' is not its meaning. And the unfortunate use of this term, so dear to the Christian amidst the troubles of the world, has tended in no small degree to make believers think less of strength than of comfort, of the experience of a private Christian who needs consolation instead of that of one who has to face the opposition of the world in his Master's cause. The 'Paraclete' is really One who stands by our side, sustains us in our Christian calling, and breathes into us ever new measures of a spirit of boldness and daring in the warfare we have to wage. He is the representative of the glorified Lord with His militant people upon earth. The promise of this Paraclete or Advocate is given four times in the chapters before us (the only other passage in the New Testament where the word occurs being 1 John ii. 1); and in the first two, chap. xiv. 16, 26, it has reference mainly to the preparation of the heart and mind of the disciples; in the other two, chaps. xv. 26, xvi. 7, to their actual work.

The Advocate thus spoken of is further marked out by the remarkable addition of the word '*another*;' and the word implies that the first Advocate had been Jesus Himself, whose 'going away' prevented His continuing to be still the Advocate and Helper of His disciples. In this sense we find Him described by the very term here used in 1 John ii. 1: 'We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.' It is in the idea of representation that the two designations meet. Jesus glorified represents us before the Father's throne; the Holy Spirit abiding with us represents Jesus gone to the Father. This word 'other' is thus full of the most precious meaning. It tells us that Jesus when on earth had been the Paraclete, the Advocate of His disciples. It suggests that what He had been to them during His earthly life, His representative will be after He has 'gone away,' so that every narrative of what He had done for them becomes a *prediction* of what the Holy Spirit *will* do for them and for us who come after them. The verb 'ask' of this verse is different from that so translated in vers. 13 and 14; and it can be used only of One who stands in that closeness of relation, in that intimacy of union with the Father, in which Jesus is represented throughout these chapters as standing to Him (comp. chaps. xvi. 26, xvii. 9, 15, 20).

Ver. 17. **Even the Spirit of the truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it beholdeth him not, neither learneth to know him: ye learn to know him, because he abideth with you, and is in you.** What this Advocate is, is now explained more fully. He is the Spirit of 'the truth,' the Spirit whose essence is 'the truth,' and who is the medium by which 'the truth' comes to men. This Spirit the world cannot receive, because it has no perception of the things with which He deals, no sympathy with them, no adaptation to them. As it cannot 'hear God's words, because it is not of God' (chap. viii. 47), so it cannot receive the Spirit of the truth, because it

has no eye for the spiritual and invisible, and no growing apprehension of them. The Spirit comes to the world, and would stay with it; but it will not have Him for a guest, and it never attains to that experimental knowledge of Him which is alone worthy of the name. But the disciples are 'of the truth'; they welcome the heavenly Guest; He 'abides' with them; He 'is' in them; they advance to ever deeper knowledge of what He is and does. How much by these words 'abideth' and 'is' is the analogy between the presence of Jesus and of the Spirit with us brought out. No two words of the Gospel are more characteristic of the former.

Ver. 18. **I will not leave you desolate: I come to you.** The disciples were the 'little children' of Jesus (chap. xiii. 33), and He may therefore well speak to them as a father. Not from Pentecost, but from the moment of His reunion to the Father, and by means of the Spirit of the truth, He comes to them (see ver. 20).

Ver. 19. **Yet a little while, and the world beholdeth me no longer; but ye behold me.** The 'little while' here spoken of is that of chap. xiii. 33, extending from the moment immediately at hand to the resurrection. After that 'little while' the world beholdeth Jesus no more, but His disciples behold Him,—the present tense being used in both clauses absolutely, and not as the mere present of time. In the first clause 'beholdeth' can be understood only of physical vision, for in no other way had the world ever beheld Jesus, and it is thus impossible to exclude a reference to the fact that the risen Saviour did not show Himself to the world. In the second clause 'behold' must be so far at least used in the same sense, and the appearance of the risen Jesus must again be thought of. Yet the meaning of the second 'behold' is not thus exhausted, for it obviously includes a vision of the Redeemer not limited by the forty days between the resurrection and the ascension, but stretching onward into the eternal future. The difference of vision, however, does not lie directly in the word itself: it is conditioned by the state in which Jesus is supposed to be, and by the necessities of the case. The 'Me' of the verse is Jesus glorified: Him, because He is glorified, the world unfit for the vision 'beholdeth no longer.' But the disciples, one with Him not only in His humiliation but in His 'glory,' behold Him, first from time to time with the eye of sense, always with the eye of faith and in the power of the Spirit. It need only be further remarked that this intensifying of the meaning of the second 'behold' may be indicated by the order of the original, which gives the place of emphasis to the word in the second clause; and that, by the view now taken, we at once see the connection of the words that follow: only the 'living' can behold the risen Lord, or have the abiding spiritual sight.—**Because I live and ye shall live.** Not, 'Because I live ye shall live also,'—which would divert the thoughts to something entirely foreign to the course of our Lord's remarks; but, 'Because I live glorified, and ye, in this respect wholly different from the world, shall live in the power of Me your risen Lord, therefore shall this intimacy of intercourse, implied in My coming and your beholding, last unbroken and for ever.'

Ver. 20. **In that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.** Not the particular day of the resurrection, or of



Pentecost, or of the Second Coming, but the day beginning with the return of Jesus to His Father, when He shall send to His disciples the promised Advocate, the Spirit of the truth. Then in the knowledge of ever-deepening experience they shall know that the Son of man whom they had thought 'gone away' is really in the bosom of His Father, glorified in the Father (comp. chap. xiii. 31), that they are in Him thus glorified, and that He thus glorified is in them. So shall the end of all be attained, the perfect union in glory of Father, Son, and all believers, in one uninterrupted, unchanging, eternal unity (comp. xvii. 21, 23). It is of great importance to note the expression, 'Ye in me, and I in you.' We cannot here follow out the thought, but we must not fail to notice that the fulness of the union referred to belongs only to the time of Jesus glorified. The limiting influences of the world, of the flesh, must be overpassed before that perfect union of all existence is reached which can be established only (for 'God is Spirit,' chap. iv. 24) where the Spirit is the dominating, all-embracing, all-controlling element of being. Jesus says 'my Father,' not 'the Father,' because His personal union with the Father forms the basis of the wider and more glorious union here referred to.

Ver. 21. **He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.** The thought of privilege in ver. 14 led to that condition on which alone privilege can be preserved (ver. 15). We have a similar transition now. Here, as there, one thing must be distinctly remembered, that this unity is one of love. There is love on the part of the believer to his Lord, love on the part of the Father to the believer, love on the part of Jesus to the believer. In this fellowship of love the result of all will be the manifestation by Himself of the glorified Redeemer to His people. He will 'manifest' Himself *from His glory*, and in knowing and seeing Him by the power of the Spirit they will know and see the Father. A third difficulty arises in the breast of Judas.

Ver. 22. **Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how hath it come to pass that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?** Judas is distinguished from the traitor, that we may have kept distinctly before us that the latter had gone out (chap. xiii. 30). His error consists in not seeing that the spiritual can only be apprehended by the spiritual. Filled with the thought of the external kingdom, he cannot understand why the glorious revelation of Christ to be made to himself and his fellow-disciples should not be made to all, so that all may believe and be blessed.

Ver. 23. **Jesus answered and said unto him, If any one love me, he will keep my word; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.** Again the thought of ver. 15, and a fuller expression of the main teaching of this chapter, and, indeed, of this whole section of the Gospel. The answer to Judas is, that the manifestation referred to must be limited, because it can only be made where there is that communion of love which proves itself by the spirit of self-denial and submission to the charge of Jesus (comp. vers. 17, 21). Two additional points are to be noted—(1) The climax :

no longer 'I' but 'We,' a fuller presentation of the truth. (2) The beginning of the discourse is taken up again, and thus its parts are more closely united: 'In my Father's house are many places of abode' (ver. 2); 'We will make our abode with him.'

Ver. 24. **He that loveth me not keepeth not my words: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me.** A fuller explanation than before why the world cannot receive the manifestation of the Father and the Son, but given now from the negative rather than the positive side. It will be observed that in vers. 23, 24, we have first 'word,' then 'words,' and then, again, a return to the singular 'word.' The explanation may in part be that to him who receives in faith the 'words' of Jesus are one; he sees their unity; they are a 'word': to him who receives not in faith they are scattered and unconnected, 'words' not a 'word.' It may be found also in another consideration,—that he who keeps keeps a whole, he who disobeys disobeys the several precepts. We remark only further that our Lord, while implying in vers. 23 and 24 that the world cannot receive such a manifestation of the Father and of Himself as had been promised to His own, shows with equal distinctness that there is no class favoured in an arbitrary manner. *All make themselves* what they are. If 'any one,' He says, 'love me;' and, again, 'he that loveth me.' The world need not be the 'world.' Every one may come and have the promise in all its fulness.

Ver. 25. **These things have I spoken unto you while abiding with you.** We now enter upon a new part of the discourse, in which the leading idea is the strength to be afforded to the disciples after the departure of their Lord. It is important to notice that this is bestowed upon them not merely as disciples, but as disciples about to be sent forth to occupy their Master's place, and to do His work. During the absence of their Master the Advocate shall be with them.

Ver. 26. **But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and he will bring to your remembrance all things that I said unto you.** Again we meet with the expression 'in my name' already considered by us at ver. 13, where we saw that it primarily refers to the name 'Son,' and then to the revelation of the Father in the Son. It will be found that this conception suits each of those nine places in chaps. xiv.-xvii. where the words occur, as well as the two others in chap. xvii. where Jesus speaks of manifesting or declaring the 'name' of God. Here the Father sends the Holy Spirit 'in the name' of Jesus; that is, the sending of the Spirit is grounded in the Father's revelation of Himself in the Son. It is because in Him He reveals Himself to us as our Father, because He makes us by faith in Him His own sons, that we are brought into that relation to Him which enables us to receive the fulness of His Spirit. In this verse, as contrasted with ver. 16, we have not merely a promise of the Spirit of the truth. There is an advance of thought, and the Spirit is spoken of in His *training* power, as He *applies* to the heart 'the truth' which is His being. Several particulars in the words before us illustrate this. First, there is the epithet 'holy,' which here, as throughout this Gospel, expresses the idea of complete separation from all that is of the world, and complete consecration to all that is

spiritual and heavenly (comp. chaps. iii. 34, x. 36). Secondly, the Father is to 'send' the Spirit to the disciples even as He sent the Son (ver. 24), a statement indicating that He is sent to be in them for a similar purpose. And lastly, the 'all things' that the Spirit is to teach must (according to the rules suggested by the climactic structure of our Gospel) be included in the 'all things' spoken by Jesus, and now to be brought to their remembrance. What Jesus taught shall be the 'all things' that they are taught; can they be taught for any other purpose than to be again spoken for the salvation of men? In the words of Jesus 'all things' needed for man's salvation are implicitly contained, and with that teaching the disciples shall be filled. These considerations lead directly to the conclusion, of which we shall often have to make use in the closing chapters of this Gospel, that Jesus is now dealing with His disciples not as simply believers in His name, but as persons about to enter on His work.

Ver. 27. **Peace I leave unto you; a peace that is mine I give unto you: not as the world giveth give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.** The peace spoken of here is not the legacy of a dying father, but the salutation of a departing Master. It is thus not mere peace of heart, a pacified conscience, the result of a personal resting in the love of God. It is peace in the midst of the trials which the world brings on the followers of Jesus while they perform their task; peace that is the result of His having 'overcome the world' (comp. on chap. xvi. 33). 'My' peace, again, is the peace which Jesus Himself enjoys, as well as that which He alone can give: this peace becomes the true possession of the receiver (comp. on chap. xvii. 14). The effect is that the disciples shall neither be 'troubled' from within, nor 'afraid' with a coward terror in the presence of outward foes.

Ver. 28. **Ye heard that I said unto you, I go away and I come unto you. If ye loved me, ye would have rejoiced that I go unto the Father, because the Father is greater than I.** But the disciples were not only to have peace: true love would fill their hearts with joy. The 'going away' of Jesus is really a 'going unto the Father, a re-establishment in all the glory of the Father's immediate presence. The last clause of the verse contains simply the general teaching of the Gospel, of the whole Bible, and of all the greatest theologians of the Church, that the Son, while of the same nature as the Father, is subordinate to Him, inferior (for essence is not spoken of) economically, as Mediator. While, however, the departure of Jesus was thus a return to the glory of the Father's presence, and good for Him, we must not suppose that it is on that account that the disciples are to 'rejoice.' 'If ye loved me' is not an appeal to their personal interest in Himself: it appeals rather to their interest in His work and purpose; it is a statement of the fact that ripened Christian perception, when they stand in the 'love' spoken of in vers. 21, 23, 24, will lead them to see that the departure of Jesus to His Father was an arrangement fraught with far higher blessings, both to His believing people and to the world, than His remaining among them would have been. The love which is the condition of higher revelations will teach them that the departure preliminary to these is not a matter of sorrow but of joy.

Ver. 29. **And now I have told you before it**

**come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe** (comp. on chap. xiii. 19). It is not a first faith, but the deeper working of faith, the experimental seal to it, that is spoken of.

Ver. 30. **I will no longer talk much with you, for the prince of the world cometh.** (Comp. on chap. xii. 31.) Here it is particularly to be noted that 'the prince of this world' is equivalent to the world in its essence. He embodies the spirit of the world, so that what is said of it may be said of him, what is said of him may be said of it. Observe the 'cometh,' the contrast of the 'coming' of Jesus.—**And he hath nothing in me.** Ver. 31. **But he cometh that the world may perceive that I love the Father, and that even as the Father gave me commandment so I do. Arise, let us go hence.** The difficulty of interpreting these words is undoubtedly very great. The common interpretations of 'hath nothing in me'—such as, 'hath no power over me,' 'I die freely'; 'hath no ground of accusation against me,' 'I am innocent'; 'hath no hold on me,' 'I present no point on which he can fasten his attack'—are all at variance with the meaning of the verb 'hath' in the writings of John. Nor is the difficulty met by the suggestion which removes the full stop after 'so I do,' and connects 'Arise, let us go hence' with 'but,' thus making the intermediate words ('he cometh' not being then, as in our translation, supplied) express the object to be attained by the arising and going. For, in that case, instead of the discourse in chaps. xv. and xvi. and the prayer of chap. xvii., this chapter ought to have been immediately followed by the last conflict with the world. The true interpretation seems to be that there is an absolute barrier between the 'prince of this world' and Jesus. Neither in the Person (in whom is no sin) nor in the work of the Redeemer has he any interest; there is absolutely no point of connection (the expression of the original is strong) between him and these. He has deliberately opposed, denied, and rejected the truth. Therefore he has now nothing to do with it—except in one terrible respect! The following words point out the exception. He 'comes,' and the 'world' ruled by Him comes, to see that He whom they have rejected is the 'consecrated One' of God, the 'Sent' of God, the Fulfiller of the Father's will. But they come to see this only when it is too late; when amazement and horror alone remain for them; when the judgment shall be executed; and when out of their own mouth they shall be condemned. The words in short express, although far more pointedly than elsewhere, the great truth so often stated in Scripture, that those who reject the salvation shall meet the judgment of Jesus, and that, when they meet it, they shall acknowledge that it is just. Blind now, they shall not be always blind; their eyes shall be opened; and to their own shame they shall confess that He whom they rejected was the 'Beloved' of the Father, and that His work was the doing of the Father's will. It is only necessary to add that, while this shall be the fate of this 'world' and of its 'prince,' the possibility of the individual's passing from the power of the world into the blessed region of faith in Jesus is always presupposed. The description applies to the world as it hardens itself in impenitence against its rightful Lord, and rushes on its fate.

Hence the startling close of the discourse,

'Arise, let us go hence.' Not merely, 'Let us meanwhile arise, and leave this place that we may go to another where my discourse may be resumed;' but, 'Let us go: I have led you to the glorious places of abode in my Father's house, and I have followed the world to its doom; I have traced the history of mankind to its close; it is over; arise, let us go hence.'

It is not easy to determine with certainty at what moment, or even in what place, the discourse which we have been considering was spoken. As to the latter point, indeed, the closing words of the chapter do not leave much doubt. Jesus and His disciples must still have been in the upper chamber where the Supper was instituted. The precise moment is more difficult to fix. Yet, when we turn to Luke xxii. 35-38, we find there words of Jesus so obviously connected with the topics handled here that we may, with great probability, suppose that both belong to the same period of that night. If so, the discourse in the present chapter was delivered after the Supper was instituted, and before our Lord rose from the table. We may further express our belief that the

discourse in chaps. xv. and xvi. was spoken in the same place, the difference being that during its delivery, as well as during the intercessory prayer of chap. xvii., Jesus and His disciples stood. Not only is chap. xviii. 1 (hardly permitting us to think of a 'going forth' till after 'He had spoken these things') favourable to this view, but it is extremely improbable that chaps. xv.-xvii. could have been uttered on the way to Gethsemane. The tone of thought, too, in chaps. xv. and xvi. appears to be in harmony with this conception of the circumstances. We shall see in the exposition how much more the idea of apostolic action and suffering comes out in these chapters than it does even in chap. xiv. To this corresponded the attitude of rising and standing. The appropriate demands of the moment, therefore, and not any change of intention, led to our Lord's still continuing in the upper room. He stands there with the solemnised group around Him. 'I have given you,' He would say by action as well as word, 'My commission and My promise; let us be up and doing; there is still deeper meaning in the commission, still greater richness in the promise.'

## CHAPTER XV. 1-XVI. 33.

*Jesus, alone with His Disciples, finishes His last Consolatory Discourse.*

- 1 I AM the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.  
 2 Every <sup>a</sup>branch in me which beareth not fruit he taketh <sup>1</sup> away: and every *branch* that <sup>a</sup>beareth fruit, he purgeth <sup>2</sup> it, <sup>b</sup>that it may bring forth <sup>4</sup> more fruit. Now <sup>b</sup>ye are <sup>5</sup> clean <sup>c</sup>through <sup>6</sup>the word which I have spoken unto you. 'Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more <sup>7</sup> can ye, except ye abide <sup>d</sup>in me. I am the vine, ye *are* the branches: <sup>e</sup>He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth <sup>8</sup> much <sup>d</sup>fruit: <sup>f</sup>for <sup>9</sup>without <sup>10</sup>me ye can do nothing. If a man <sup>11</sup>abide not in me, <sup>g</sup>he is cast forth as a <sup>12</sup>branch, and is withered; and men <sup>13</sup>gather them, and cast *them* into the fire, and they are burned.<sup>14</sup>  
 7 If ye abide in me, and <sup>f</sup>my words <sup>15</sup>abide in you, <sup>e</sup>ye shall <sup>16</sup>ask what <sup>17</sup>ye will, and it shall be done unto you. <sup>h</sup>Herein is <sup>18</sup>my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; <sup>f</sup>so shall ye <sup>19</sup>be <sup>19</sup>my disciples. <sup>i</sup>As <sup>20</sup>the Father hath <sup>21</sup>loved me, so <sup>22</sup>I <sup>23</sup>loved you: continue ye <sup>24</sup>in my love. <sup>h</sup>If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have <sup>i</sup>kept my <sup>25</sup>Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

<sup>a</sup> Comp. Matt. iii. 10; Luke xiii. 9.

<sup>b</sup> Chap. xiii. 10 xvii. 17; Eph. v. 26.

<sup>c</sup> Vers. 5, 6, 7; x John ii. 6, 27, 28. iii. 6. See chap. vi. 56, xvii. 23.

<sup>d</sup> Phil. i. 11, iv. 13.

<sup>e</sup> Matt. xiii. 40, 41, 42.

<sup>f</sup> Chap. viii. 31. Comp chap. v. 38; Col. iii. 16.

<sup>g</sup> Ver. 16; chap. xiv. 13.

<sup>h</sup> Matt. v. 16; Phil. i. 11.

<sup>i</sup> Chap. xvii. 23.

<sup>h</sup> Chap. xiv. 15.

<sup>i</sup> Chap. viii. 55, x. 17, 18.

<sup>1</sup> taketh it

<sup>2</sup> and all that which

<sup>3</sup> cleanseth

<sup>4</sup> may bear

<sup>5</sup> Already are ye

<sup>6</sup> because of

<sup>7</sup> so neither

<sup>8</sup> beareth

<sup>9</sup> because

<sup>10</sup> apart from

<sup>11</sup> any one

<sup>12</sup> the <sup>13</sup> they

<sup>14</sup> and they burn

<sup>15</sup> sayings

<sup>16</sup> omit ye shall

<sup>17</sup> whatsoever

<sup>18</sup> was

<sup>19</sup> that ye might bear much fruit and become

<sup>20</sup> I also

<sup>21</sup> Even as

<sup>22</sup> omit hath

<sup>23</sup> omit so have

<sup>24</sup> abide <sup>25</sup> the

- 11 These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might  
 12 remain<sup>26</sup> in you, and *that*<sup>m</sup> your joy might be full.<sup>27</sup> <sup>n</sup> This is  
 my commandment, That ye love one another, as<sup>28</sup> I have<sup>29</sup>  
 13 loved you. Greater love hath no man<sup>30</sup> than this, <sup>o</sup> that a  
 14 man<sup>31</sup> lay down his life for his friends. <sup>p</sup> Ye are <sup>q</sup> my friends,  
 15 if ye do whatsoever<sup>32</sup> I command you. Henceforth I call you  
 not<sup>33</sup> servants; for<sup>34</sup> the servant knoweth not what his lord  
 doeth: but I have called you friends; <sup>r</sup> for<sup>35</sup> all things that I  
 have<sup>36</sup> heard of<sup>37</sup> my Father I have<sup>38</sup> made known unto you.  
 16 Ye have not chosen<sup>39</sup> me, but <sup>s</sup> I have chosen<sup>40</sup> you, and  
 ordained<sup>41</sup> you, that ye should go<sup>42</sup> and bring forth<sup>43</sup> fruit, and  
*that*<sup>t</sup> your fruit should remain: <sup>u</sup> that <sup>v</sup> whatsoever ye shall<sup>44</sup>  
 17 ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you. <sup>w</sup> These  
 things I command you, that ye love<sup>45</sup> one another.  
 18 <sup>x</sup> If the world hate<sup>46</sup> you, ye<sup>47</sup> know that it hated<sup>48</sup> me before  
 19 *it* hated you. <sup>y</sup> If ye were of the world, the world would love  
 his<sup>49</sup> own: but because<sup>50</sup> ye are not of the world, but <sup>z</sup> I have  
 chosen<sup>51</sup> you out of the world, therefore<sup>52</sup> the world hateth  
 20 you. Remember the word that I said unto you, <sup>aa</sup> The<sup>53</sup> servant  
 is not greater than his lord. If they have<sup>54</sup> persecuted me,  
 they will also persecute you; <sup>ab</sup> if they have<sup>55</sup> kept my saying,<sup>56</sup>  
 21 they will keep yours also. But <sup>ac</sup> all these things will they do  
 unto you for my name's sake,<sup>57</sup> because they know not him that  
 22 sent me. <sup>ad</sup> If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had  
 23 not had<sup>58</sup> sin: but now they have no cloke<sup>59</sup> for their sin. <sup>ae</sup> He  
 24 that hateth me hateth my Father also. If I had not done  
 among them the <sup>af</sup> works which none other man<sup>60</sup> did, they had  
 not had<sup>61</sup> sin: but now have they both seen and hated both  
 25 me and my Father. But *this cometh to pass*, <sup>ag</sup> that the word  
 might<sup>62</sup> be fulfilled that is written in their law, <sup>ah</sup> They hated  
 26 me without a cause. But<sup>63</sup> when <sup>ai</sup> the Comforter<sup>64</sup> is come,  
 whom I will send unto you from the Father, *even*<sup>65</sup> the Spirit  
 of truth,<sup>66</sup> which proceedeth<sup>67</sup> from the Father, <sup>aj</sup> he shall  
 27 testify<sup>68</sup> of<sup>69</sup> me: And <sup>ak</sup> ye also shall<sup>70</sup> bear witness, because  
 ye have been with me from the beginning.<sup>71</sup>
- CHAP. XVI. 1. These things have I spoken unto you, that ye  
 2 should<sup>72</sup> not be <sup>al</sup> offended.<sup>73</sup> They shall <sup>am</sup> put you out of the

- <sup>26</sup> may be      <sup>27</sup> may be fulfilled      <sup>28</sup> even as      <sup>29</sup> omit have  
<sup>30</sup> no one      <sup>31</sup> one      <sup>32</sup> that which      <sup>33</sup> No longer do I call you  
<sup>34</sup> because      <sup>35</sup> from      <sup>36</sup> did not choose      <sup>37</sup> I chose  
<sup>38</sup> appointed      <sup>39</sup> add away      <sup>40</sup> bear      <sup>41</sup> abide      <sup>42</sup> omit shall  
<sup>43</sup> may love      <sup>44</sup> hateth      <sup>45</sup> omit ye      <sup>46</sup> hath hated  
<sup>47</sup> its      <sup>48</sup> because of this      <sup>49</sup> A      <sup>50</sup> will persecute you also  
<sup>51</sup> word      <sup>52</sup> because of my name      <sup>53</sup> would not have      <sup>54</sup> excuse  
<sup>55</sup> omit man      <sup>56</sup> may      <sup>57</sup> omit But      <sup>58</sup> Advocate  
<sup>59</sup> omit even      <sup>60</sup> the truth      <sup>61</sup> goeth forth      <sup>62</sup> will bear witness  
<sup>63</sup> concerning      <sup>64</sup> omit shall      <sup>65</sup> because from the beginning ye are with me  
<sup>66</sup> may      <sup>67</sup> made to stumble

- <sup>m</sup> Chap. xvi.  
<sup>n</sup> 24, xvii. 13;  
<sup>o</sup> 1 John i. 4;  
<sup>p</sup> 2 John 12.  
<sup>q</sup> Comp. chap.  
 iii. 29.  
<sup>r</sup> Ver. 17;  
<sup>s</sup> chap. xiii. 34;  
<sup>t</sup> 1 John iii. 11,  
 23, iv. 7, 21.  
<sup>u</sup> See Matt.  
 xix. 19.  
<sup>v</sup> Chap. x. 11.  
<sup>w</sup> Matt. xii. 50.  
<sup>x</sup> Luke xii. 4.  
<sup>y</sup> Chap. iii. 32,  
 xvii. 8.  
<sup>z</sup> Ver. 19;  
<sup>aa</sup> chap. vi. 70,  
 xiii. 18.  
<sup>ab</sup> Ver. 7.  
<sup>ac</sup> Ver. 12.  
<sup>ad</sup> Chap. vii. 7;  
<sup>ae</sup> 1 John iii. 13,  
 iv. 5.  
<sup>af</sup> Chap. xvii.  
 24; 1 John  
 v. 19.  
<sup>ag</sup> Chap. xiii.  
 16.  
<sup>ah</sup> See chap.  
 xvi. 3.  
<sup>ai</sup> Ver. 24;  
<sup>aj</sup> chap. ix. 41.  
<sup>ak</sup> Chap. v. 23;  
<sup>al</sup> Luke x. 16;  
<sup>am</sup> 1 John ii. 23.  
<sup>an</sup> Chap. iii. 2,  
 x. 25.  
<sup>ao</sup> Chap. xiii.  
 18.  
<sup>ap</sup> Ps. xxxv. 19,  
 lxxix. 4.  
<sup>aq</sup> Chap. xiv.  
 16, 17, 26.  
<sup>ar</sup> Acts v. 32;  
<sup>as</sup> 1 John v. 6.  
<sup>at</sup> Chap. xix.  
 35; Luke  
 xxiv. 48;  
<sup>au</sup> 1 John i. 2.  
<sup>av</sup> See Acts i. 8.  
<sup>aw</sup> Matt. xi. 6.  
<sup>ax</sup> Chap. ix. 22.

- synagogues: yea, the time<sup>68</sup> cometh, that <sup>†</sup>whosoever<sup>69</sup> killeth<sup>†</sup> Acts xxii. 1,  
 3 you will<sup>70</sup> think that he doeth God service.<sup>71</sup> And these things<sup>†</sup> xxvi. 9, 10  
 will they do unto you,<sup>72</sup> because <sup>†</sup>they have not known<sup>73</sup> the<sup>†</sup> Phil. iii. 2.  
 4 Father, <sup>†</sup>nor me. But <sup>†</sup>these things have I told<sup>74</sup> you, that<sup>†</sup> Chap. i. 20,  
 when the time shall come,<sup>75</sup> ye may remember<sup>76</sup> that I told you<sup>†</sup> viii. 19, xv.  
 of them.<sup>77</sup> And these things I said not unto you at<sup>78</sup> the be-<sup>†</sup> 21, xvii. 25;  
 5 ginning, because I was with you. But now <sup>†</sup>I go my way<sup>79</sup> to<sup>†</sup> 1 John iii. 2.  
 him that sent me; and none of you asketh me, Whither goest<sup>†</sup> Chap. xiii.  
 6 thou?<sup>80</sup> But because I have said<sup>81</sup> these things unto you,<sup>†</sup> 19, xiv. 23.  
 7 <sup>†</sup>sorrow hath filled your heart. Nevertheless I tell you the<sup>†</sup> Ver. 10, 28;  
 truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not<sup>†</sup> chap. vii. 33,  
 away, the <sup>†</sup>Comforter<sup>82</sup> will <sup>†</sup>not come unto you; but <sup>†</sup>if I<sup>†</sup> xiii. 3, xiv.  
 8 depart,<sup>83</sup> I <sup>†</sup>will send him unto you. And when he is come, he<sup>†</sup> 12.  
 will <sup>†</sup>reprove<sup>84</sup> the <sup>†</sup>world of<sup>85</sup> sin, and of<sup>86</sup> righteousness, and<sup>†</sup> Ver. 22.  
 9 of<sup>87</sup> judgment: Of<sup>88</sup> sin, because they believe not on<sup>89</sup> me;  
 10 Of<sup>87</sup> righteousness, because I go<sup>90</sup> to my<sup>91</sup> Father, and ye see<sup>†</sup> Chap. xiv.  
 11 me no more;<sup>92</sup> <sup>†</sup>Of<sup>87</sup> judgment, because the prince of this<sup>†</sup> 16, 26.  
 world is<sup>93</sup> judged.<sup>†</sup> Comp. chap.  
 12 I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear<sup>†</sup> vii. 39.  
 13 them now. Howbeit<sup>94</sup> when he,<sup>95</sup> <sup>†</sup>the Spirit of truth,<sup>96</sup> is<sup>†</sup> Acts ii. 33;  
 come,<sup>94</sup> he <sup>†</sup>will guide you into all truth:<sup>97</sup> for he shall<sup>98</sup> not<sup>†</sup> Eph. iv. 8.  
 speak of<sup>99</sup> himself; but whatsoever<sup>97</sup> he shall hear, <sup>†</sup>that<sup>98</sup> shall<sup>†</sup> See chap.  
 14 he<sup>99</sup> speak: and he will show you<sup>1</sup> things to come.<sup>2</sup> He shall<sup>†</sup> viii. 46.  
 glorify me: for<sup>3</sup> he shall receive of mine,<sup>4</sup> and shall show<sup>5</sup> <sup>†</sup> Chap. i. 29.  
 15 unto you. <sup>†</sup>All things that<sup>6</sup> the Father hath are mine: therefore<sup>†</sup> Chap. xii. 31.  
 said I, that he shall take<sup>7</sup> of<sup>8</sup> mine, and shall show<sup>5</sup> <sup>†</sup>it unto you.  
 16 <sup>†</sup>A little while, and <sup>†</sup>ye shall not see me:<sup>9</sup> and again, a little<sup>†</sup> Chap. xiv.  
 while, and <sup>†</sup>ye shall see me, because I go to the Father.<sup>10</sup><sup>†</sup> 17,  
 17 Then said<sup>11</sup> <sup>†</sup>some of his disciples<sup>12</sup> among themselves,<sup>13</sup> What<sup>†</sup> Chap. xiv.  
 is this that he saith unto us, A little while, and ye shall not see<sup>†</sup> 19.  
 me:<sup>14</sup> and again, a little while, and ye shall see me: and,  
 18 <sup>†</sup>Because<sup>15</sup> I go<sup>16</sup> to the Father? They said therefore, What<sup>†</sup> Ver. 10.  
 is this that he saith,<sup>17</sup> A little while? we cannot tell<sup>18</sup> what he

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <sup>68</sup> an hour                               | <sup>69</sup> every one that                        | <sup>70</sup> should                   |
| <sup>71</sup> offereth service unto God             | <sup>72</sup> omit unto you                         | <sup>73</sup> they know not            |
| <sup>74</sup> spoken unto                           | <sup>75</sup> when their hour is come               | <sup>76</sup> add them                 |
| <sup>77</sup> omit of them                          | <sup>78</sup> I told you not from                   | <sup>79</sup> I go away                |
| <sup>80</sup> add away                              | <sup>81</sup> spoken                                | <sup>82</sup> Advocate                 |
| <sup>83</sup> And he, when he is come, will convict | <sup>84</sup> in                                    | <sup>85</sup> go                       |
| <sup>86</sup> in                                    | <sup>87</sup> and concerning                        | <sup>88</sup> concerning               |
| <sup>89</sup> ye no longer behold me                | <sup>90</sup> hath been                             | <sup>89</sup> the                      |
| <sup>91</sup> the truth                             | <sup>92</sup> omit is come                          | <sup>91</sup> But                      |
| <sup>93</sup> omit that                             | <sup>94</sup> he will                               | <sup>92</sup> <sup>93</sup> he is come |
| <sup>95</sup> because                               | <sup>96</sup> of that which is mine will he receive | <sup>94</sup> from                     |
| <sup>97</sup> whatsoever                            | <sup>98</sup> he receiveth                          | <sup>95</sup> add things               |
| <sup>99</sup> ye behold me no longer                | <sup>100</sup> omit because I go to the Father      |  |
| <sup>101</sup> omit Then said                       | <sup>102</sup> add therefore                        | <sup>101</sup> said one to another     |
| <sup>103</sup> ye behold me not                     | <sup>104</sup> omit Because                         | <sup>102</sup> add away                |
| <sup>105</sup> this which he calleth                | <sup>106</sup> we know not                          |  |

- 19 saith.<sup>19</sup> Now<sup>20</sup> Jesus knew<sup>21</sup> that they were desirous to ask him, and<sup>22</sup> said unto them, Do ye enquire among yourselves of<sup>23</sup> that ' I said, A little while, and ye shall not see me :<sup>24</sup> and  
20 again, a little while, and ye shall see me ? Verily, verily, I say unto you, That<sup>25</sup> ye shall<sup>26</sup> weep and lament, but the world shall<sup>27</sup> rejoice : and<sup>28</sup> ye shall<sup>29</sup> be sorrowful, but your sorrow  
21 shall be turned into joy. ' A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come : but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more<sup>30</sup> the anguish,<sup>31</sup>  
22 for<sup>32</sup> joy that a man is born into the world. And<sup>33</sup> ye now therefore<sup>34</sup> have sorrow : but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man<sup>35</sup> taketh<sup>36</sup> from you.  
23 And<sup>37</sup> in that day ye shall<sup>38</sup> ask me nothing.<sup>39</sup> Verily, verily, I say unto you, <sup>40</sup> Whatsoever ye shall ask<sup>41</sup> the Father in my  
24 name,<sup>42</sup> he will give it<sup>43</sup> you.<sup>44</sup> Hitherto have<sup>45</sup> ye asked nothing in my name : ask, and ye shall receive, <sup>46</sup> that your joy may be full.<sup>47</sup>  
25 These things have I spoken unto you in<sup>48</sup> proverbs : but<sup>49</sup> the time<sup>50</sup> cometh, when I shall no more<sup>51</sup> speak unto you in pro-  
26 verbs, but I shall show<sup>52</sup> you plainly of<sup>53</sup> the Father. <sup>54</sup> At<sup>55</sup> that day ye shall ask in my name : and I say not unto you,  
27 that I will pray<sup>56</sup> the Father for<sup>57</sup> you : For<sup>58</sup> the Father himself loveth you, <sup>59</sup> because ye have loved me, and have<sup>60</sup> believed  
28 that I came out<sup>61</sup> from God.<sup>62</sup> ' I came forth from the Father, and<sup>63</sup> am come into the world : again, <sup>64</sup> I leave the world, and  
29 go to the Father. His disciples said<sup>65</sup> unto him,<sup>66</sup> Lo, now  
30 speakest thou plainly, and speakest<sup>67</sup> no proverb. Now are we sure<sup>68</sup> that<sup>69</sup> thou knowest all things, and needest not<sup>70</sup> that any man<sup>71</sup> should ask thee :<sup>72</sup> by this<sup>73</sup> we believe that thou  
31 camest forth from God. Jesus answered them, Do ye now  
32 believe ? Behold, the<sup>74</sup> hour cometh, yea,<sup>75</sup> is now<sup>76</sup> come, that<sup>77</sup> ye shall<sup>78</sup> be scattered, every man<sup>79</sup> to his own, and  
shall<sup>80</sup> leave me alone : and yet<sup>81</sup> I am not alone, because the  
33 Father is with me. These things I have spoken unto you, that<sup>82</sup> in me ye might<sup>83</sup> have peace. <sup>84</sup> In the world ye shall<sup>85</sup> have tribulation : but<sup>86</sup> be of good cheer ;<sup>87</sup> <sup>88</sup> I have overcome the world.

19 speaketh  
28 concerning this,  
37 tribulation  
31 no question  
33 omit in my name  
36 fulfilled  
40 tell  
44 forth  
48 sayest  
53 an 58 and  
57 omit shall

20 omit Now  
24 will  
28 for her  
33 If ye shall ask anything of  
34 add in my name  
37 omit but  
41 concerning  
45 from the Father  
49 now we know  
54 omit now  
56 may

21 perceived  
28 omit and  
29 therefore now  
38 an hour  
43 In  
46 say  
50 one  
55 should  
59 omit shall

22 and he  
26 no longer  
30 one

35 omit have  
39 no longer  
48 ask  
47 omit unto him  
51 add questions  
56 each one  
60 courage

c Ver. 16.

d Comp. Matt. ix. 15; Mark xvi. 10.

e Isa. xxvi. 17.

f Ver. 6.

g Luke xxiv. 41, 52; chap. xiv. 1, xx. 20; Acts ii. 46, xiii. 52; 1 Pet. i. 8.

h Ver. 26; chap. xiv. 20. i Chap. xiii. 36, 37. xiv. 5, 22. Comp. vers. 19, 30; chap. xiv. 8. j Chap. xiv. 11.

k Chap. xv. 11. l Ver. 29; chap. x. 6; 2 Pet. ii. 22. m Ver. 23.

n Chap. xiv. 21, 23. o Comp. chap. xiii. 20. p Ver. 30; chap. xvii. 8. q Chap. viii. 42.

r Ver. 10; chap. xiii. 1, 3.

s Chap. ii. 25. t Ver. 23. u Ver. 27.

w Matt. xxvi. 31. x Chap. viii. 16.

y Chap. xiv. 27. z Chap. xv. 19, 20, 21; 2 Tim. iii. 12. a Chap. xiv. 1. b Rom. viii. 37; 1 John iv. 4. v 4.

**CONTENTS.** We have already considered the circumstances under which the two chapters upon which we now enter were spoken; and, if we have been correct in the view taken of them, we are not to imagine that the first figure of chap. xv. was suggested by a vine seen at the moment on the slope of the temple mount, down which the Lord and His disciples were passing. It is equally improbable that it was suggested by a vine penetrating into the room where they were gathered together. Apart from all other considerations, it is enough to say that, at this season of the year, the vine was hardly far enough advanced to supply materials for the different illustrations used. The solemnity of the moment, the fulness of Old Testament thought which dwelt in the mind of Jesus, perhaps even a reminiscence of that 'fruit of the vine' of which they had all so recently partaken, are enough to account for the language with which our Lord begins this second part of His last discourse. It is of more importance to observe that it is distinguished from what goes before, not so much by presenting us with matter entirely new, as by applying the same line of instruction in an advanced form to the advanced position in which the disciples are supposed to be. In chap. xiv. the main thought is that of the true union brought about by the apparent separation; the chief reference has been to personal experience; and the climax is reached in vers. 20 and 23. That is the *preparation* of the disciples for their work; they 'are' in Him, and He in them. The chief thought now is that of 'abiding,' and this abiding presupposes difficulty and trial. 'Being' in Him is life: 'abiding' in Him is life working, triumphing. It is the disciples working, then, that we have before us; and how well does this correspond to what we have already said of the standing attitude in which this discourse was most probably delivered. It will be observed that the advance from chap. xiv. to chaps. xv. and xvi. consists in the application of principles rather than in any change from one set of principles to another.

The subordinate parts of the section are—(1) chap. xv., vers. 1-17; (2) vers. 18-27; (3) chap. xvi., vers. 1-11; (4) vers. 12-15; (5) vers. 16-24; (6) vers. 25-33.

**Ver. 1. I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman.** In the Old Testament the vine is the type of Israel, planted by the Almighty as the husbandman to adorn, refresh, and quicken the earth (Ps. lxxx.; Isa. v. 1; Jer. ii. 21; Ezek. xix. 10; Hosea x. 1). But Israel proved itself 'the degenerate plant of a strange vine.' Jesus, therefore, is here the 'true vine,' because He is the true Israel of God, in whom is fulfilled all that is demanded of the true vine, whether for beauty and blessing to the world, or for glory to the husbandman. In Him all His people are summed up. He is not merely the stem: He is 'the vine,' including in Himself all its parts. He is thus also the 'true' (comp. on chap. i. 9) vine, in contrast not so much with a degenerate Israel within Israel as with Israel after the flesh as a whole, with the ancient Theocracy even in its best and palmiest days. That Theocracy had been no more than a shadow of the true; now the 'true' was come, and God Himself had planted it.

**Ver. 2. Every branch in me which beareth not fruit, he taketh it away; and all that which beareth fruit, he cleanseth it, that it may bear more fruit.** Two parts of the husbandman's

operations with his vine are here alluded to, the first that of taking away unfruitful branches. Any branch of the vine that is found, and as soon as it is found, to be not fruit-bearing is cut off. It is probable that the allusion is primarily to Judas (comp. chap. xvii. 12), but thereafter to all of whom the traitor is the representative, who, taking their places for a time in the number of the disciples, prove by the result that they have no right to be there (comp. 1 John ii. 19). They are branches of the vine; but, as only outward and carnal not inward and spiritual, they are taken away, their further fate being not yet mentioned. The second part of the husbandman's work follows, that of pruning, for which the word cleansing, with its deeper meaning, is appropriately used. The object of the Father is the inward, spiritual, cleansing of His children, in contrast with the outward purifications of Israel (chaps. ii. 6, iii. 25); and the cleansing spoken of (which follows, not precedes, their fruit-bearing) is future and continuous. The means are afflictions, not of any kind but for the sake of Jesus, here especially the afflictions to which the disciples shall be exposed in doing their Master's work, as He Himself 'learned obedience by the things which He suffered.' The attaining of this perfection is, however, a gradual process, and hence the words 'that it may bear more fruit.' It is possible that the 'fruit' to be borne may include all Christian graces, although it would seem as if the general growth of the Christian life were rather set forth in the growth and strengthening of the 'branch.' The considerations already adduced, and the whole strain of the discourse, lead us rather to understand by the 'fruit' now spoken of fruit borne in carrying on the work of Jesus in the world (comp. on ver. 16).

**Ver. 3. Already are ye clean because of the word which I have spoken unto you.** On 'word,' not 'words,' see on chap. xiv. 24. The 'ye' is emphatic. *They* were pruned, *they* were 'clean;' and that 'already,' because they had already received the word which they were now, in their turn, to communicate. Jesus does not say that they are clean 'through,' but 'because of' the word which He had spoken unto them. They have heard (and received) the word of 'the Holy One of God,' and because His word is in them they are clean. Thus are they fitted for imparting the means of a like cleansing to others. Not personal piety but Christian action is still in view, and still the 'cleanness' which they possess does not exclude the future and continuous cleansing.

**Ver. 4. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; so neither can ye, except ye abide in me.** Thus cleansed, one thing more is required, that they maintain their position, that they continue in the vine. It is the law of the branch that, if it is to flourish and bear fruit, there must be a constant and reciprocal action between it and the vine of which it is a part. This is expressed in the two clauses before us. He who will not abide in Christ cannot have Christ to abide in him. How much is made dependent upon the human will!

**Ver. 5. I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit; because apart from me ye can do nothing.** The transition from ver. 4 to

ver. 5 appears to be similar to that from chap. v. 19-23 to chap. v. 24,—a transition from the principle to its application to men. In substance the lesson is the same as before; and it has only to be distinctly observed that the words 'ye can do nothing' refer to the efforts of one already a believer. The state of faith is presupposed.

Ver. 6. **If any one abide not in me he is cast forth as the branch, and is withered; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they burn.** 'The branch' here is simply 'the branch' of ver. 4, the branch considered in itself: the words 'cast forth' and 'is withered' are so used in the original as to denote the certainty, the immediateness, of the doom referred to: the last three verbs of the verse carry our thoughts to a later period than that to which the casting out and the withering belong. Instead of exhibiting beauty of leaf and bearing clusters of fruit, these branches shrivel up, die, and are consumed. It is to be observed that, although the branches spoken of are barren, it is not their barrenness that is the immediate thought here, but the fact that they do not abide in the vine.

Ver. 7. **If ye abide in me, and my sayings abide in you, ask whatsoever ye will, and it shall be done unto you.** The sudden departure in this verse from the figure which our Lord had been employing is worthy of notice. A somewhat similar departure occurs at ver. 3, and in both cases it takes place in connection with a reference to the 'word' or 'sayings' of Jesus: these belong to living men. The thought that the 'sayings' of Jesus abide in us as the condition of blessedness is fundamentally the same as that expressed previously in ver. 3, 'because of the word'; the mode in which the word works is now more fully brought out. Still more worthy of notice is the fact that, in the latter part of the verse, where the asking is spoken of, the words 'in My name' do not occur; but in their place we find, 'If ye abide in Me, and My sayings abide in you.' This strikingly illustrates what we have already endeavoured to bring out, that 'in My name' implies a union with Jesus by faith, resting on a knowledge of and adherence to the revelation that He has given. The asking spoken of must be understood not in a general sense, but with a special reference to bearing fruit. Were this not the case the verse would be quite isolated.

Ver. 8. **Herein was my Father glorified, that ye might bear much fruit and become my disciples.** The last verse had expressed the highest and closest communion that can be established between the believer and the Father revealed in the Son,—a communion so high, so close, that the former asks whatsoever he will and it is done unto him. But that is the attainment of all God's purposes, the issue of all His dealings, with His people. The 'Herein' of this verse is, accordingly, not to be explained by the words that follow, as if the meaning were that the glory of God is found in His appointing His people to bear much fruit and be disciples of Jesus. That is the *result* of His purpose rather than the purpose itself. The purpose is union, communion, fellowship; and out of these flows an ever-increasing bearing of fruit ('much fruit'), and an ever-growing conformity ('become' not 'be') of the believer with his Lord, alike in privilege and in life. 'Herein was my Father glorified' belongs, therefore, to the previous verse,—to that abiding in

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Jesus, and that asking and receiving in Him, which expressed the purpose of the Father (comp. chap. xiv. 13). At the point we have reached this is supposed to be accomplished, and as a consequence of such abiding fellowship with the Father and the Son comes the growing fruitfulness, the deepening discipleship, of those who are true branches of the fruitful vine. Hence the rendering 'was glorified' seems preferable to 'is glorified,' which we retain in chap. xiii. 31. It is an ideal state of things with which we are dealing; and the much fruit and the discipleship referred to do not belong only to the present, but, like the 'cleanness' spoken of in ver. 3, are also future and continuous.

Ver. 9. **Even as the Father loved me, I also loved you: abide in my love.** By keeping in view what has been said on ver. 8 we shall understand the transition here to the thought of love. The main thought of that verse was, as we have seen, that of union and communion with the Father and the Son; but the main element of that communion is love,—love which flows forth from the Father to the Son, and then from the Son to the members of His body, thus forming that community of love so often spoken of in these chapters. In this love, then (it follows as a necessary consequence), we must 'abide' if we would experience its fruits. It is hardly necessary to say that 'My love' is the Lord's love to His people, not theirs to Him.

Ver. 10. **If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept the Father's commandments, and abide in his love.** The disciples have heard the words 'abide in my love.' How are they to do so? The words before us are an answer to the question; and they constitute a parallel to those which we have already met at xiv. 20, 21, only that now we read not merely of 'being,' but of 'abiding,' the characteristic word of this chapter. It is not simply the doing of special commandments that is thought of (comp. on chap. xiii. 34), but a complete adoption of the Father's will by the Son and of the Son's will by us: and this is not spoken of as a proof of love, but as the condition which makes continued love possible. The Father never ceases to love the Son, because the Son's will is the expression of His own. The Son never ceases to love His disciples, because their will is the expression of His will; and without this harmony of will and act union and fellowship are impossible.

Ver. 11. **These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be fulfilled.** 'My joy' must be interpreted in the same way as 'My peace' at chap. xiv. 27. It is the joy which Jesus possessed as 'anointed with the oil of gladness above His fellows,' which flowed from His uninterrupted possession of His Father's love (ver. 9), which was ever and again renewed as He felt that He was accomplishing His Father's will (ver. 10), which was crowned in that uninterrupted intercourse with His Father in which He asked and received whatsoever He desired (chap. xi. 42), and which filled His heart amidst all the trials and sorrows of His work on earth (comp. Luke x. 21). That very joy He will communicate to His disciples, and their joy will be then 'fulfilled.' Like Him who went before them, they shall 'see of the travail of their soul and shall be satisfied.' The arrangement of the words in the original of this



verse, by which 'my' is brought into the closest juxtaposition with 'in you,' is worthy of notice (comp. chap. xiv. 1, 3).

Ver. 12. **This is my commandment, That ye love one another, even as I loved you.** The sum of what was to be said in this part of the discourse has been spoken. One point needs further elucidation—love. It is here enjoined and explained anew. The singular 'commandment' does not differ materially from the plural of ver. 10 (see on that verse, and comp. on chap. xiv. 23, 24). Jesus had loved them with a self-sacrificing love; and because He had so loved them He charges them to live in self-sacrificing love for one another. The 'I loved you' is not to be resolved into 'I have loved you.' As at chap. xiii. 34, it is of His love brought back to their minds in His absence that He speaks.

Ver. 13. **Greater love hath no one than this, that one lay down his life for his friends.** How great His love which showed itself even unto death for them! They must imitate such love if they will 'keep His commandment' and exhibit His spirit. There is no contradiction between this statement and that in Rom. v. 6-8. Enemies are not here in question. Jesus is alone with His friends, and one friend can give no greater proof of love to another than to die for him. The emphasis rests upon 'lay down his life,' not upon 'friends.'

Ver. 14. **Ye are my friends, if ye do that which I command you.** We have here no second motive to the exercise of brotherly love, based upon the obedience which the friends of Jesus are bound to render to Him. The emphatic 'Ye' shows clearly that Jesus would impress upon them with peculiar force that they were His friends. We must accordingly interpret in a manner similar to that applied at chap. xiv. 15. The words describe a condition or state: 'Ye are my friends for whom in love I lay down My life,' and ye continue such in being led by the power of My love to lay down your lives for one another. This is your new and glorious state, for

Ver. 15. **No longer do I call you servants, because the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth; but I have called you friends, because all things that I heard from my Father I made known unto you.** At chap. xiii. 16 Jesus had spoken of them as 'servants'; and (so closely connected with one another are the chapters which we are considering) we can hardly doubt that it is this very passage that He has now primarily in view. Then they had to learn the lesson of the foot-washing: now it is learned; and, animated by a self-sacrificing love like His, they are no longer 'servants' but 'friends.' In one sense, indeed, they would be always 'servants' (comp. ver. 20), and in the other writings of the New Testament we see that even some of those now listening, as well as Paul, delighted to appropriate to themselves the title (2 Pet. i. 1; Apoc. i. 1; Rom. i. 1, etc.); but that is not their only relationship to their Lord. Nor are the two relationships inconsistent with one another. Rather may we say that the livelier our sense of the privilege of friendship the deeper will be our humility, and that the more truly we feel Jesus to be our 'Lord and Master' the more shall we be prepared to enter into the fulness of the privilege bestowed by Him. The evidence of this their state (or privilege) is given in the remainder of the verse. Jesus

had kept nothing back from them of all that He their Lord was to 'do'; He had revealed to them all the will of God, in so far as it related to His Own mission and theirs for the salvation of men. This was what He 'heard' from the Father, with whose will His will was in such perfect unison that what He heard He did (comp. chap. v. 30); and now, in the familiarity, the confidence, the fondness, of friendship He makes it known to them.

Ver. 16. **Ye did not choose me, but I chose you, and appointed you, that ye should go away and bear fruit, and that your fruit should abide.** But He had not taught them merely to fill their minds with knowledge. He had 'heard' from the Father that He might 'do.' They 'hear' that they may 'do' also. As the Father, having taught, had sent Him, so He, having taught, sends them. He had 'chosen' them—a choice having here nothing to do with eternal predestination, but only with choosing them out of the world after they were in it. He had 'appointed' them, had put them into the position which they were to occupy on their post of duty. The manner in which their post is described is important. It is by the word 'go away,' the word so often used of Jesus Himself in this part of the Gospel. They were to 'go away'; that is, they had a departure to make as well as He. This can be nothing else but their going out into the world to take His place, to produce fruit to the glory of the Father, and to return with that fruit to their Father's house. How manifest is it that here again we have to do with the fruits of active Christian labour, not of private Christian life!—**That whatsoever ye ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.** This is the culminating-point of the climax, taking us to the thought of that intimacy of communion with the Father which secures the answer to all our prayers, and the supply of all our needs.

Three times now have we met in this discourse the promise just given, and the attentive reader will easily perceive the interesting gradation in the circumstances in which those to whom it is successively given are supposed to be. At xiv. 12, 13, they are viewed simply as believers; at xv. 7, they 'abide in Christ, and His sayings abide in them'; now they have 'gone away,' and have borne abiding fruit. To each stage of Christian living and working the same promise in words belongs, but the fulness included in the words is dependent in each case on the amount of need to be supplied. It may be questioned how we are to understand the second 'that' of this verse, whether as co-ordinate to the first 'that,' and so, like it, dependent on 'I have chosen you,' or as expressing a consequence of their bringing forth abiding fruit in their work of Christian love. The latter is undoubtedly to be preferred. Jesus chooses out His disciples for work first, for correspondingly higher privilege afterwards; and those who faithfully bear fruit are here assured that in this sphere of fruit-bearing with all its difficulties, and temptations, and trials, they shall want nothing to impart courage, boldness, hope, to make them overcome the world, as He Himself overcame it.

Ver. 17. **These things I command you, that ye may love one another.** A verse characteristic of the structure of this Gospel, forming like chap. v. 30 at once a summary (to a large extent) of what has preceded, and a transition to what follows.

All the great truths spoken by Jesus are intended to promote that which is the truest expression of the Divine, that which is the real ground and end of all existence—love. On the other hand, again, the mutual love of believers is that armour of proof in which they shall be able best to withstand the hatred of the world.

Ver. 18. **If the world hateth you, know that it hath hated me before it hated you.** It is the active work of the disciples that has been before us in the preceding verses, but that work always has provoked, and always will provoke the world's hatred. In such a prospect, therefore, there is need for strength; and strength is given by means of truth presented in one of the double pictures of our Gospel,—the first extending to the close of chap. xv., the second to chap. xvi. 15. First of all, in that hatred which they shall certainly experience, let them behold a proof that, engaged in their Master's service, they are really filling their Master's place; and let them feel that the trials that befell Him ought surely to be no 'strange thing' to them. Their Master, their Friend, their Redeemer trod the same path as that which they must tread. What thought could be more touching or more full of comforting and ennobling influences?

Ver. 19. **If ye were of the world, the world would love its own; but because ye are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, because of this the world hateth you.** The word 'of' here calls attention to the root from which one springs. Did the world behold in them its own offspring, it would love them; they would be its own. The rule is universal and needed no further exposition; but they were not 'of' the world, they were born of a new and higher birth, they had even like their Master to bear witness of the world that its works were evil, and therefore it must hate them as it hated Him (comp. chap. vii. 7, and 1 Kings xxii. 8).

Ver. 20. **Remember the word that I said unto you, A servant is not greater than his lord: if they persecuted me, they will persecute you also; if they kept my word, they will keep yours also.** The word referred to had been spoken at chap. xiii. 16, in an apparently different sense, but really, alike there and here, with the same deep oneness of meaning. The disciples are in the position of their Master, are one with Him; therefore are they bound to the same duties and exposed to the same trials. The parallelism between the 'word' of Jesus and that of His disciples is instructive. Lying at the bottom of all the language here employed is the great truth that what He has been they are to be.

Ver. 21. **But all these things will they do unto you because of my name, because they know not him that sent me.** Their sufferings shall not only be like those of Jesus, but 'because of His name,' because of all that is involved in His Person and work—the Person and the work which they continually hold forth to men. The latter part of the verse contains at once an explanation of the world's folly and guilt, and a striking comment upon the fullness of meaning involved in the word 'name.' It is because the world knows not God that it hates alike the Son and His disciples. It thinks that it knows God, it has even a zeal for His worship; but the spirituality of His nature, the love which is the essence of His being, it does not know; it turns from them and hates them when they are revealed in their true character; how can it do otherwise than hate One

who is the very expression of that spirituality and love; and, hating Him, how can it fail to hate those who continue His work?

Ver. 22. **If I had not come and spoken unto them, they would not have sin; but now they have no excuse for their sin.** But in so doing the world is without excuse. Its unbelief, with all that hatred of the disciples to which it led, is its own deliberate act, its ground of condemnation at the bar of God, to be in due time the terrible ground of its own self-condemnation. Everything had been done, alike by the word and the works (ver. 24) of Jesus, to lead it to the truth and to a better mind. The revelation of the Father, given by the Son, was not only the highest that could be given, it was such that it ought to have found an answer in that voice which even in the heart of the world echoes to the Divine voice. That it did not do so was the world's sin,—a sin self-chosen, without ground, without excuse. There is not merely instruction, there is also consolation to the persecuted followers of Jesus in the thought.

Ver. 23. **He that hateth me hateth my Father also.** Nay more, in hating Jesus the world was also setting itself against that very God whom it professed to honour. It was really hating not the Son only but His Father whom He revealed. This was the disastrous issue of its course of action! Not they who inflicted suffering, but they who suffered, were the conquerors.

Ver. 24. **If I had not done among them the works which none other did, they would not have sin; but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father.** Jesus had spoken in ver. 22 of his 'words' as sufficient to deprive the world of all excuse in rejecting and hating Him. He now turns to His 'works' as effecting the same end. The words of Jesus were the Father's words as well as His own (chap. iii. 34); of the same character are the 'works,' which here, as elsewhere, are not to be confined to miracles. They include all that Jesus did, and their appeal had been to the same internal eye which ought to have seen the force and beauty of the 'word.' But that eye the world had closed, and for the same reason as before, so that it was again without excuse.

Ver. 25. **But this cometh to pass, that the word may be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause.** The quotation is in all probability from Ps. lxi. 4, with which Ps. xxxv. 19 and cix. 3 may be compared. On the 'fulfilment' spoken of see what has already been said on chaps. ii. 17 and xii. 38. The quotation is made for the purpose of bringing out the aggravated guilt of those who were rejecting Jesus. They had condemned their fathers because of the persecutions to which God's Righteous Servant of old had been exposed: yet they 'filled up the measure of their fathers.' Their pride and carnal dependence upon outward descent from Abraham blinded their eyes to the distinction between truth and falsehood, right and wrong, and made them do what they acknowledged in the light of Divine truth, of Scriptures which they honoured, to be worthy of condemnation in their own fathers.

Light is thus thrown upon the words 'their law,' which become the Fourth Gospel rendering of Matt. xxiii. 30. The very law of which the Jews boasted, and into which, from imagined reverence for it, they were continually searching,—

in that very law they might see themselves In such a connection of thought might it not be called 'their law'?

Vers. 26, 27. **When the Advocate is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, the Spirit of the truth, which goeth forth from the Father, he will bear witness concerning me, and ye also bear witness, because from the beginning ye are with me.** Up to this point Jesus had encouraged His disciples by the assurance that they shall be strengthened to overcome whatever hatred and opposition from the world they shall have to encounter in the performance of their work. Now He further assures them that this is not all. They shall not merely meet the world unshaken by all that it can do: they shall also receive a Divine power, in the possession of which they shall bear a joyful and triumphant witness even in the midst of suffering. The Advocate shall be with them, and with them in a manner adapted to that stage of progress which they are thought of as having reached. In the promise of the Advocate here given there is an advance upon that of chap. xiv. 16, 26. In the latter passage the promise had been connected with the *training* of the disciples for their work; in the present it is connected with the *execution* of the work. First of all, the Advocate 'will bear witness' concerning Jesus, will perform that work of witnessing which belongs to heralds of the Cross. *But He will do this in them.* We are not to imagine that His is an independent work, carried on directly in the world, and apart from the instrumentality of the disciples. It is true that there is a general influence of the Holy Spirit by which He prepares the ear to hear and the eye to see—such an influence as that with which He wrought in Judaism and even in heathenism; but that is not the influence of which Jesus speaks in the words before us. It is a specific influence, the *power* of the Spirit, to which He refers—that influence which, exerted through Himself when He was upon the earth, is now exerted through the members of His Body. In the two last verses of this chapter, therefore, we have not two works of witnessing, the first that of the Advocate, the second that of the disciples. We have only one,—outwardly that of the disciples, inwardly that of the Advocate. Hence the change of tense from the future to the present when Jesus speaks of 'ye,—the Advocate 'will bear witness,' ye 'bear witness.' The two witnessings are not on parallel lines, but on the same line, the former coming to view only in and by the latter, into which the power of the former is introduced. Hence also the force of the emphatic 'Ye.' The personality and freedom of the disciples does not disappear under this operation of the Advocate; they do not become mechanical agents, but retain their individual standing; they are still men, only higher than they could otherwise have been. Hence, finally, the reason assigned for the part given to the disciples in the work; they are from the beginning 'with Jesus,' with Him as partners and fellow-workers; and this 'from the beginning,' that is, from the beginning which belongs to the subject in hand—the beginning of His ministry.

The 20th verse of this chapter is often thought to be of great importance in regard to the doctrine of the 'Procession' of the Holy Spirit, the Greek Church finding in it its leading argument for maintaining that that 'Procession' is only from

the Father, not from the Son. So far as this text is concerned, the question resolves itself into the further one, Is Jesus here speaking of the *Person* or of the *office* of the Advocate, of the *source* of His being or of His *operation*? Attention to the preposition used with 'the Father' ought at once to decide this point. It is 'from' not 'out of' that is employed: it is of office and operation, not of being and essence, that Jesus speaks (comp. chaps. i. 6, 14, vii. 29, ix. 16, x. 18, xvi. 27, xvii. 8). The words 'which goeth forth from the Father' are not intended to express any metaphysical relation between the First and Third Persons of the Trinity, but to lead our thoughts back to the fact that, as it is the distinguishing characteristic of Jesus that He comes from the Father, so One of like Divine power and glory is now to take His place. The same words 'from the Father' are again added to 'I will send,' because the Father is the ultimate source from which the Spirit as well as the Son 'goes forth,' and really the Giver of the Spirit through the Son who asks for Him (comp. chap. xiv. 16). In the power of this Spirit, therefore, the connection of the disciples with the Father will, in the time to come, be not less close, and their strength from the Father not less efficacious, than it had been while Jesus was Himself beside them. The emphasis on the 'I' of 'I will send' ought not to pass unnoticed. It is as if Jesus would say, 'You tremble at the prospect of my going away, you fear that you will be desolate, but it is not so. I will not forget you; I will be to you, through the Spirit, all that I have been; I will send the Advocate to be in you and by your side.' Could more be necessary to sustain them? The consolation offered reaches here its culminating point; but all has yet to be made clearer, fuller, more impressive; and to effect this, not to introduce new teaching, our Lord proceeds to what we have spoken of as the second of the double pictures of this part of His discourse.

CHAP. XVI. 1. **These things have I spoken unto you, that ye may not be made to stumble.** The 'things' referred to are especially those described in chap. xv. 18-27, and the verse is a pause (not the introduction of a new idea) before the same subject is resumed: there is no change either of circumstances or of topic: the difference between this passage and the earlier is simply one climax. Vers. 1-6 correspond to chap. xv. 18-25: vers. 7-11, to vers. 26, 27 of the same chapter. The word 'make to stumble' is used in this Gospel only in one other passage, vi. 61. It points to the danger of having faith and constancy shaken by trial instead of standing firm in allegiance to Jesus, whatever might be the difficulties encountered in His service.

Ver. 2. **They shall put you out of the synagogues; yea, an hour cometh that every one that killeth you should think that he offereth service unto God.** It is of Jews that Jesus speaks, and the figure is therefore naturally taken from Jewish customs; but opposition on the part of Jews is in these discourses the type of all opposition to the truth. On the severity of the trial alluded to in the first clause of the verse, see on chap. ix. 22. Yet not merely excommunication but death in every one of its varied forms shall be their portion. Nay, they shall even be regarded by their murderers as a sacrifice to be offered to God; they shall be slain as a part of the worship due to Him. 'Every one who sheds the blood of the impious is

as if he offered a sacrifice,' is said to have been a Jewish maxim. Not in indifference only or in lightness of spirit shall they be slain, to make a Jewish or a Roman holiday, when perhaps their fate might be mourned over in soberer hours, but in such a manner that those who slay them shall return from the scene as men who have engaged in what they believe will gain for them the favour of heaven. It is impossible to imagine a darker picture of fanaticism. Yet the picture is heightened by the mention of 'an hour,' an hour laden with the divine purpose, which must 'come' to them as it had come to Jesus Himself.

**Ver. 3. And these things will they do, because they know not the Father, nor me.** The root of the opposition as formerly spoken of, chap. xv. 21.

**Ver. 4. But these things have I spoken unto you, that, when their hour is come, ye may remember them, that I told you.** The analogy of such passages as chaps. ii. 22, xii. 16, xiv. 26, seems to show that the 'remembering' here spoken of is not an effort of memory alone. It involves the deeper insight given by experience and the teaching of the Spirit into the meaning and purpose of trial in the economy of grace. The disciples shall so remember that they shall have a fresh insight into the mystery of the Cross. Nay more, they shall learn to feel themselves peculiarly identified with their Lord. As there was an 'hour' in which His enemies were permitted to rage against Him, an hour which was *theirs* (Luke xxiii. 53), so there is an hour again given them when they shall rage against the preachers of the truth (comp. ver. 2).—**And these things I told you not from the beginning, because I was with you.** Had Jesus, then, not told them these things in the earliest period of His ministry? It is often urged that passages such as Matt. v. 10, ix. 15, x. 16, show us that He had, and that it is impossible to reconcile these with the words before us. Yet we have only to put ourselves into the position of our Lord and His disciples in order to see that there is no contradiction. It is not merely that He now speaks, or that they now understand, with greater clearness than before. His 'going away' is an essential part of 'these things,' and with it all that He now says is so connected that it has its meaning only in the light of that departure. He could not then have so spoken 'from the beginning,' for the simple reason that He was *not* then going away. General allusions to their coming sufferings there might be and were. But that they would have to take His place, and, in doing so, to find that His trials were their trials, He had never said. That solemn lesson was connected only with the present moment, when their training was completed, and they were to be sent forth to be as He had been.

**Vers. 5, 6. But now I go away to him that sent me; and none of you asketh me, Whither goest thou away? But because I have spoken these things unto you, sorrow hath filled your heart.** It was in the joyful consciousness that His 'going away' was really a going to the Father, that Jesus had been speaking. But the disciples had not sufficiently considered this. They had looked upon His departure simply as a departure from themselves, and had failed to enter into all the glorious consequences connected with it. Thus they had been overwhelmed with sorrow. It is true that, at chap. xiii. 36, Peter had asked

'Whither goest Thou away?' But he had done this with no sufficient thought of the 'Whither': the parting, not the goal to which Jesus went, had been in his mind. It was with no proper sense of its real meaning, therefore, that the question had been put. The suitable words might have been used, but not with the spirit and feeling which they ought to have expressed. This state of mind, not the failing to use certain words, is that which Jesus has now in view, and to which He refers with a certain sadness before He points out (as He does in the following verses) that, truly considered, His departure was not less a cause of rejoicing to His disciples than it was to Himself (comp. chaps. xvi. 22, xvii. 13).

**Ver. 7. Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Advocate will not come unto you; but if I go, I will send him unto you.** Sorrow filled the hearts of the disciples at the thought of the departure of their Lord. Now, therefore, in these His crowning teachings, not only must their sorrow be dispelled, but they must be sent forth with the joyful assurance that, so far from His departure's being a just cause of sadness, it is rather that which shall secure to them the most glorious strength in their conflict with the world, and the final possession of the victory. The great truths set forth, then, in the deeply-important verses on which we now enter are: (1) That the departure of Jesus is the indispensable condition of the bestowal of the Holy Spirit; (2) That through such bestowal the world with which the disciples must contend shall become to them not only a conquered, but a self-convicted, foe. The first of these truths comes before us in ver. 7, the second in vers. 8-11. The first thing to be observed in the former verse is that in it, along with ver. 5, no fewer than three different words are used to express the idea of 'going away' or 'going.' Between the first two there is probably little difference, although the second may bring less markedly into view than the first the mere thought of departure. The third, in the words 'if I go,' is distinguished from both of them in that it distinctly expresses not so much the thought of departure as that of going to the Father (comp. chaps. xiv. 2, 3, 12, 28, xvi. 28). The glorification of Jesus, then, is here clearly in view; and this passage teaches the same lesson as chap. vii. 39, that upon that glorification the bestowal of the power of the Spirit was dependent (comp. on chap. vii. 39). Not that the Holy Spirit had been given in no degree before. He had certainly wrought in Judaism, and had even been the Author of all the good that had ever appeared in heathenism: but He had not been given *in power*, had not been the essential characteristic of an era in which He had made only scattered and isolated manifestations of His influences. It was to be different now. The era to begin was the era of the Spirit, in which He was to breathe a new life into the world. Various reasons may be assigned why *this* gift of the Spirit could be bestowed only after Jesus was glorified; but we omit them for the sake of that which seems to us the main consideration upon the point. The end of all God's dealings with man is that he shall be brought into the closest and most perfect union with Himself, and that, in order to this, He shall be spiritualised and glorified. This is effected through Him who took human nature into union with the Divine, and the end of whose course

is not the Incarnation, but His being made 'the first-born' among many brethren so spiritualised, so glorified. Only, therefore, when this end is reached is Jesus, as not only Son of God but Son of man (chap. iii. 14, 15), in full possession of the Spirit: only then is He so set free from the conflicts and the troubles of the time of His 'sufferings' (Heb. ii. 10, v. 8) that His Own spiritual power and glory are illimitable and unconditioned; only then can He bestow in His fulness that Spirit which, as the essential characteristic of His Own final, perfect state, is to raise us to the similar end which the purpose of God contemplates with regard to us. In this sense the Holy Spirit not only was not but could not be given so long as Jesus was on earth, unglorified. But then, when, as Son of man glorified, and still, because Son of man, in closest fellowship with us who are men, He should have in Himself all the power of the Spirit,—then would He be able—and how could they who knew His love doubt that He would be willing?—to pour forth upon His disciples that 'Spirit of glory and of God' which should make them more than conquerors over all their adversaries. Surely it was 'expedient' for them that He should 'go away,' and, in going away, 'go' to the Father. Nay, it was better for them that He should 'go away' than that He should remain; for not only was this fulness of the Spirit connected with His glorified condition, but the disciples, instead of leaning upon Him as they had done, would gain all that strengthening of character which flows from working ourselves rather than having work done for us by another.

Ver. 8. **And he, when he is come, will convict the world concerning sin, and concerning righteousness, and concerning judgment.** The Agent has been spoken of; we now enter upon His work, and the climax from chap. xv. 26, where the same aspect of the Spirit's work is spoken of, is clearly perceptible. We are not to understand by the word 'convict' either simply 'reprove' or 'convince.' It is much more than both, and implies that answer of conscience to the reproving convincing voice, by which a man condemns himself (chaps. iii. 20, viii. 26). The word 'concerning' also is not the same as 'of.' The inference to be drawn from these considerations (comp. also on chap. xiv. 30, 31) is that in the conviction of the world here spoken of its conversion is not necessarily implied. Conversion may or may not follow for anything here stated. The promise now given to the disciples is not that they shall convert the world, but that it shall be silenced, self-condemned, overwhelmed with shame and confusion of face. The Judge of all the earth is upon their side; He will judge for them.

Vers. 9–11. **Concerning sin, because they believe not in me: and concerning righteousness, because I go away to the Father, and ye no longer behold me: and concerning judgment, because the prince of this world hath been judged.** The general work of conviction to be effected by the Spirit having been stated in ver. 8, the several particulars are next explained more fully. The point of view from which all are to be looked at is that of the controversy with the world in which Jesus had Himself been engaged. So long as He was on the earth this controversy was left unsettled; but after His departure, His disciples, in the power of the promised Advocate,

shall bring it to a triumphant issue. The first part of that controversy had reference to sin. The world had cast on Jesus the imputation of sin (chaps. v. 18, vii. 20, etc.); and, on the other hand, His whole work and life had been first directed to bring the charge of sin home to the world. But the world had no just idea of what sin was. It thought of gross violations of the Divine law, or of violations of positive religious ceremonial: of sin in its true sense, not only as a departure from truth and love, but as even a failing to recognise and welcome these with all the affection of the heart and devotion of the life, it had no idea. Hence the work here spoken of—the work of Him who was at once the Advocate of Jesus and of His disciples. He shall convict the world of wrong in its estimate of Jesus, and thus also in its estimate of itself. He shall bring home to the world the fact that it believed not in Jesus, did not trust itself to Him as the impersonation of Divine truth and love, and that in this lay sin. Nay, not only so, the world shall learn that in this lies the very essence and root of all sin, for it is really a rejection of the Father manifested in Jesus—it is hating the light and choosing darkness (chap. iii. 21, etc.). Thus it was unnecessary to speak of other sins: this was the crowning sin, inclusive of them all.

The second part of the controversy of Jesus with the world had reference to righteousness;—in what righteousness really lay, what the true nature of righteousness was. The world boasted of its righteousness; in its form as the Jewish world it was proud of its fathers, of its outward inheritance from them, and of itself. Jesus had pronounced that righteousness to be worthless (Matt. v. 20, etc.). Again, which of them is right? The Advocate, working in the disciples, shall decide the controversy in such a manner that the world shall be silenced. He will bring home to it the truth that, notwithstanding its rejection of Jesus, the Father has received Him, and has set His seal upon Him as His Righteous One. Hence the last words of ver. 10, 'because I go away unto the Father, and ye no longer behold me,'—words which do not seem to mean that the realm of faith shall henceforth be the abiding state of the kingdom of God on earth, and the home of the righteousness which is of faith, but which appear simply to give expression to that removal from the bodily sight of the disciples which is the essential concomitant of the glorifying. They gently explain that what brought such grief to those who were now to be separated from their Lord was the very means of accomplishing the great purpose that the Father had in view—the settlement of the controversy as to His Son, and the manifestation of what the Son really was. It is interesting to notice how the disciples, at a time when the work of conviction here spoken of had begun, dwell upon that characteristic of Jesus which is thus referred to (Acts iii. 14, vii. 52, xxii. 14; Rom. i. 1, etc.).

The third part of the work of conviction is that of judgment; and it has reference to the same controversy to which, as we have seen, the two previous parts of the work of the Spirit are related. The world had judged Jesus; but He, on the other hand, had judged the world; and His judgment would be proved to be just when the Advocate should enable the disciples to bring home to the world that it was founded upon

eternal reality and truth. 'The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life' were now the objects of the world's ambition and pursuit; but a day was coming when it should be compelled to acknowledge a different standard of judgment; when it should discover, with terror and dismay, that its past standard had been altogether false; that what it had approved was passing away; that what it had despised was abiding for ever. Then should it see that its very prince had been judged in a manner against which there was no appeal, and that, instead of being the conqueror, he had throughout been the conquered. Then should the world be constrained to confess that it had been madly attempting to reverse the position of the everlasting scales, and had been foiled in the attempt.

Such, then, is the great work of the Holy Spirit upon the world during the whole period that was to pass between the departure of Jesus to His Father and His coming again in glory. It will be observed that it is the same work which Jesus had Himself carried on, that is now completed by the 'other' Advocate. The difference does not lie so much in the nature as in the effect of the work: to the one period belongs the beginning of the controversy; to the other, the final decision. It is also clear that the conviction spoken of is to be understood in the same sense throughout. It is not primarily a work of conversion (although it may lead to conversion) that is referred to: it is a work that confounds and overwhelms the world when, as God gives His judgments unto the King and His righteousness unto the King's Son, 'they that dwell in the wilderness shall bow before Him, and His enemies shall lick the dust' (Ps. lxxii. 9). That work is the glory of the Church of Christ as she takes her Master's place in the world; and, when she remembers that it could not be done, did not the exalted Redeemer send down to her His all-powerful Spirit, she may well feel that it was 'expedient' for her that He should go away.

Ver. 12. **I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.** Jesus is about to draw His instructions and consolations to a close. He does so by returning to the great promise of the Spirit already given in chap. xiv. 26. Yet there is a difference between the promise there and here; and the difference, as usual, is one of climax. Teaching of a higher kind is now to be referred to, for the element of *experience* comes in. It is not enough to have been taught by Jesus Himself. The disciples were to take their Master's place, and to carry on His work. The Spirit, then, who had been His strength, must be also theirs. Thus it is not so much new teaching that they need as the old teaching in a new way, brought home to their hearts with a new power. It is, indeed, often supposed that the 'many things' here spoken of refer to new truths. This seems improbable. We can hardly suppose that Jesus had left any large part of His revelation not given, especially when He had so often spoken of the revelation of 'the Father,' as if it contained the sum and substance of religious truth. Besides this, we have already seen that in the words of Jesus 'all things' are implicitly contained (comp. on chap. xiv. 26). And, further, the word 'bear' does not mean to apprehend; it is to bear as a burden, and the most glorious and encouraging truths may become a burden to one too immature to bear them.

Not, therefore, because the disciples could not in a certain sense even now understand further revelation, but because they had not yet the Christian experience to give that revelation power, does Jesus say that they cannot bear the many things that He has yet to say unto them. When shall they, or when shall the Church, be able to understand them? The answer is, When at any stage of their or her future history the 'many things' are needed, and so may have their power felt. But just because of this they need not be, as the whole context teaches us they are not to be, *new* truths. They are old truths made new, expanded, unfolded (as we see especially in the Epistles of Paul), illumined by receiving light from the lessons of history, when these are read in the spirit of Christian trust and confidence and hope, but not wholly new. There will not be in them one revelation, strictly so called, that was not in the words of Jesus Himself: but their ever greater depths shall be seen as the relations of the Church and of the world respectively become more complex. It has been so in the past: it will be so in the future. There is no reason to think that the treasure in the words of Jesus will ever be exhausted: it contains, according to the seeming paradox of the apostle, what we are 'to know,' although it 'passeth knowledge' (Eph. iii. 19). This is the true development of Christian insight and experience, not the false development of Rome.

Ver. 13. **But when he is come, the Spirit of the truth, he will guide you into all the truth: for he will not speak from himself; but whatsoever things he shall hear, he will speak: and he will declare to you the things that are coming.** These words lend strong confirmation to what has been said on the previous verse. For this work of the Spirit is evidently different from that of chap. xiv. 16, 26, or chaps. xv. 26, xvi. 7; the first pair of these passages relating to preparation for the work, the second to the discharge of its duties, while this relates to something to be given in the midst of these duties and their corresponding trials. Further, 'He shall guide' implies not merely that He shall show the way, but that He shall Himself experimentally go before them in the way (Matt. xv. 14; Luke vi. 39; Acts viii. 31; Rev. vii. 17). It will thus be observed that we are again led to think, not of new revelation, but of earlier teaching deepened by experience. The view now taken is strengthened by two important particulars in this verse:—(1) The unexpected use of 'for' in the clause 'for He shall not speak from Himself.' This word, so closely binding the clauses together, makes it plain that 'all the truth' can be nothing else than the truth of which Jesus was the Proclaimer: 'all the truth,' He would say, 'which I have proclaimed, of which I am Myself the substance (chap. xiv. 6). He will guide you, for it is not from Himself that He will speak: He comes as *My Representative*, not for new and independent offices of grace: He will carry on *My* work.' (2) When it is said, 'He hears,' we are not told whence He hears. It is possible that it may be from the Father; but when we call to mind that the unity of the Father and the Son is a leading thought in this discourse (comp. chap. xiv. 23), particularly in relation to the sending of the Spirit (comp. chap. xiv. 26, and especially chap. xv. 26), it seems highly probable that the mention of the Source whence the Spirit hears is designedly

omitted. Thus we are led to think not of the Father only, but of the Father and the Son, and again the revelation given is bounded by what Jesus has Himself revealed. The last clause of the verse may indeed, at first sight, appear inconsistent with this view. Are not 'the things to come' new revelations? We answer that in no strict sense of the words are they so. Even should we suppose that Jesus speaks of such things as 'the things to come' of the Apocalypse (chap. i. 19), these properly interpreted are not so much revelations wholly new, as new applications of what had already been revealed, and in particular of that very controversy between the Church and the world of which the mind of Jesus was now full. 'The things that are coming' are the things that happen when 'He who is to come' begins in the power of His Spirit the great conflict carried on throughout all the ages of the Christian Church in her militant condition; and the whole verse thus refers not to new revelations, but to revelations made new by the teaching of Christian experience.

Ver. 14. **He shall glorify me, because of that which is mine will he receive and will declare it unto you.** On the glorifying of Jesus here spoken of, see on chap. xiii. 31. This glory will be given Him by the powerful working of the Holy Spirit in the Church, *because* that which the Spirit applies for the ever increasing growth and efficiency of the Church is only a fuller unfolding of 'the unsearchable riches of Christ.' To Him as the Alpha and Omega of our faith, and never beyond Him, the Spirit leads us.

Ver. 15. **All things whatsoever the Father hath are mine: therefore said I that he receiveth of that which is mine, and will declare it unto you.** It is of Himself as Son of man as well as Son of God, not of Himself only as the Eternal Son, that Jesus speaks. In that capacity 'all things whatsoever' had been given Him by the Father. Therefore might He well say in the previous verse that, in leading His disciples onward to the ultimate goal of the Divine purposes, the Spirit would do this by receiving and declaring of that which was *His*. What was so received and declared would not fall short, therefore, of leading them into the highest truth—the truth as to 'the Father.'

Ver. 16. **A little while, and ye behold me no longer; and again a little while, and ye shall see me.** Trial has been spoken of and encouragement given. That both shall *soon* be known is the transition to the present verse. The difference between the verbs 'behold' and 'see' must determine the meaning of the words, the former here denoting (as in chap. xiv. 19) vision with the bodily, the latter vision with the spiritual, eye. The time closing the first 'little while' is the death of Christ, when 'not beholding' begins; the time closing the second 'little while' dates from the resurrection, when the 'seeing' begins and continues for ever (comp. chap. xiv. 19). After the death of their Lord the disciples shall be in the position of the world (chap. xiii. 13); under the saddening influence of that event their faith shall wane, and all the joy experienced in His presence shall disappear. But He whom they had thought lost for ever shall enter at His resurrection on a glorified existence, from which He shall send to them that Advocate in whom and through whom He shall be always with them, and they with Him.

Vers. 17, 18. **Some of his disciples therefore said one to another, What is this that he saith unto us, A little while and ye behold me not: and again a little while, and ye shall see me: and, I go away to the Father? They said therefore, What is this which he calleth, A little while? We know not what he speaketh.** Their perplexity is natural, and it is occasioned not only by the last words actually used by Jesus, but by what had been so prominent a point in the previous part of His discourse, that He was going away to the Father (ver. 10). They fear, however, to ask a direct explanation from their Lord, and some of them discuss the matter among themselves.

Ver. 19. **Jesus perceived that they were desirous to ask him, and he said unto them, Do ye inquire among yourselves concerning this that I said, A little while, and ye behold me not: and again a little while, and ye shall see me?** He entered at once into their difficulties, and proceeded to explain more fully what he meant, not indeed dwelling most upon the 'little while,' but upon the great and sudden contrasts of mind to be experienced by them, and previously hinted at in the words 'behold' and 'see.'

Ver. 20. **Verily, verily, I say unto you, That ye will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice: ye will be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy.** The one is the result of the 'not beholding,' the other of the 'seeing.'

Ver. 21. **A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow because her hour is come; but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no longer the tribulation for her joy that a man is born into the world.** An illustration of what had been said familiar to all, but drawn out of the very heart of Old Testament life and feeling (Isa. xxi. 3, xxvi. 17, lxvi. 7; Ps. cxviii. 3; Ezek. xix. 10). Yet there is more in the language than meets the eye at first sight, and its peculiarities form a valuable proof of the correctness of the interpretation given above by the twice repeated 'little while.' For why (1) the expression her 'hour' is come, but because the crucifixion was the 'hour' of Jesus, that of His deepest sorrow and the sorrow of His disciples? And why (2) the use of the word 'man' instead of child, when it is said 'a man is born into the world,' but because that which is brought forth in tribulation is the new birth of regenerated humanity, and because that new life with which the Church springs into being is life in a *risen* Lord (Eph. ii. 5), and carries us back to the moment when Jesus Himself rose from the grave?

Ver. 22. **And ye therefore now have sorrow; but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no one taketh away from you.** At ver. 19 Jesus had said 'ye shall see me,' but now He says 'I will see you.' It is the blessed reciprocity of intercourse between Him and His own. From the moment of the resurrection He will see them, and they shall see Him, and shall rise to the full brightness of that position to which He elevates His people. Nor will this 'seeing' terminate with the ascension, for it is their spiritual vision that is mainly thought of. In the power of the Spirit He will see them and they Him, and they shall rejoice with a triumphant and abiding joy.

Vers. 23, 24. **And in that day ye shall ask me no question. Verily, verily, I say unto you, If**

ye shall ask anything of the Father, he will give it you in my name. Hitherto ye asked nothing in my name; ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be fulfilled. The two verbs here rendered 'ask a question' and 'ask' are different; and though the former may be used of prayer when our Lord 'asks' the Father (chap. xvii. 9, 15, 20), it seems impossible to separate the use of 'ask a question' in ver. 23 from its use in ver. 19 and again in ver. 30, in both which passages it refers to asking information upon points occasioning perplexity to the mind. The declaration of Jesus thus is, that in the day when the joy of the disciples is perfected they will not need to feel that they must have Him beside them to solve their difficulties. They will then be so entirely in Him, one with Him, that along with Him they will have such a full knowledge from the Holy Spirit—a knowledge belonging to His 'day'—as will exclude the need of such questions. But this full knowledge will do more. If it restrains the questioning of ignorance, it at the same time opens their eyes to see better all their true need, and the source from which it shall be supplied. Therefore, not in a spirit of curious questioning but in a spirit of perfect trust let them approach the Father, for He will give to them 'in the name' of Jesus. He has revealed Himself to them in Jesus as their Father; He has made them in Him His own sons; therefore shall they receive as sons, and nothing shall be wanting to the fulfilment of their joy.

Ver. 25. *These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs; an hour cometh when I shall no longer speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall tell you plainly concerning the Father.* Jesus is now about to close His last discourse. At this point, accordingly, He refers to the method of teaching, of which He was giving them illustration at the moment, for the purpose of bringing out by contrast the glory of the period upon which the disciples were about to enter. On the word 'proverbs,' comp. on chap. x. 6. The contrast suggested is not between figurative and direct speech, or between enigmatical and clear sayings. Jesus had used few figures, and He had taught with the utmost simplicity and plainness of language. But the effect of His teaching had depended upon the authority of the Teacher, not on the spiritual insight of the pupil. The Teacher alone had Himself 'seen' what He described (chap. vi. 46), and it had been His aim to make His pupils understand it. Now, however, that stage of instruction was to come to a close, and the pupils, in ripened manhood, were themselves under the direct teaching of the Spirit to 'see.' That this is the case, is clear from the fact that the 'hour' of ver. 25 and the 'day' of ver. 26 were an hour and a day when Jesus was to be personally removed from His disciples, and when the 'Spirit of the truth' was to take His place. The contrast, therefore, between 'in proverbs' and 'plainly' is to be sought in the difference between outward teaching of every kind and that internal teaching which comes from the illuminating influence of the Spirit of God, and which is the best, the only true, teaching. The Spirit shall be given after Jesus goes away, and the disciples shall see in their own free and independent insight what as yet they received only upon the authority of their Master.

Vers. 26, 27. *In that day ye shall ask in my*

*name; and I say not unto you, That I will ask the Father concerning you: for the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came forth from the Father.* In these words, which may be spoken of as the last words of this discourse before Jesus turns to its closing thoughts, the encouragement that He would give to His disciples reaches its highest point. They are assured that they shall stand in such unity of love with the Father that the Father shall embrace them in constant affection as His sons, that they as sons shall approach directly to Him as their Father; and that in that intercourse there shall come to them every blessing which the fullness of Divine love can supply. The verse will best be understood by contrasting it with the words of chap. xiv. 16. There Jesus had said that He would *ask* the Father, and He would give them another Advocate. Here He says that He will not need to ask for this Advocate on their behalf; and why? *Because the Advocate has come*, because He has taken full possession of their hearts, because it is His 'day.' What is the consequence? They will ask 'in the name' of Jesus,—that is, the habit of their mind is that of prayer as persons who, through the revelation of the Father in the Son, know the Father to be their Father. Further, Jesus will not need to ask concerning them, for the Father needs no one to remind Him of His children. Lastly, the Father Himself will enfold them in His love, because in faith and love they have been united to the Son with whom He is one. It is an ideal state, the perfected state of the Church of Christ under the teaching of the Spirit; a state not yet reached by her amidst her many sins and weaknesses. Nevertheless the state is one not the less ideally true, because not yet reached; and not the less to be kept before us as the hope of our calling to that glorious issue, when all contradictions and disharmonies shall be done away, and when, through the power of the Spirit, the one unity of Father, Son, and redeemed man shall be completely realised.

Ver. 28. *I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world and go to the Father.* The connection of this verse with the preceding is not to be found in the supposition that we have here additional mention made of two great truths in which the disciples are to rest. They are supposed to be beyond that now, and the connection is best found in observing that the discourse of these chapters is about to close, and that it does so in the manner of which we have had so many illustrations, by returning again to the leading truths that had been spoken of. The words before us are accordingly a summary of the whole history of Jesus in the light of His redeeming work, from the period of His pre-existent state in the bosom of the Father to the period when He shall again return to His everlasting rest in Him. He came that He might lead men to the Father: He goes that they may be perfected in the Spirit, and that He may prepare a place for them in the many places of abode in the Father's house.

Vers. 29, 30. *His disciples say, Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and sayest no proverb: now we know that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any one should ask thee questions: by this we believe that thou camest forth from God.* Two entirely different views may be taken of the feelings and language of the disciples as here



described. Either they are really led into a sudden knowledge of the truth, thus affording a striking illustration of darkness dispelled and of heavenly light shining into the heart from the teaching of Jesus, while He again joyfully recognises their faith and beholds in it an earnest of completed victory: or the disciples misunderstand themselves, and confess their faith in a manner which, though sincere, is so imperfect that Jesus is constrained to speak to them in words of warning. The latter view is that which deserves acceptance. The disciples' words, 'now we know,' contrasting with the promise of ver. 23, a promise relating to the future, are obviously hasty; there was nothing clearer in the latest words of Jesus than in words often uttered by Him before; and, above all, the confession proves itself by its very terms to be imperfect, inadequate, inferior to that of a true faith. 'From God,' the disciples say in ver. 30; —not the 'from' of either ver. 27 or ver. 28, but one expressing a less intimate relationship with the Father than that of which Jesus had just spoken. The disciples think that they believe, but they do not believe in such a way as will alone enable them to stand in the midst of coming trial. They are not content to take Jesus at His word, that *by and by* their faith will be experimental, deep, victorious. They persuade themselves that even 'now' it is all that it need be; and they must be warned and reproved.

Vers. 31, 32. Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe? Behold, an hour cometh and is come, that ye should be scattered, each one to his own, and leave me alone; and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me. The view taken of the preceding verse leads to the conclusion that the first clause of this verse is interrogative, not affirmative, and the conclusion is favoured by chaps. vi. 70, xiii. 38. The meaning of the reply

is, 'You anticipate the time, you deceive yourselves; this faith of yours, sincere and real up to a certain point though it be, needs deepening and perfecting. It will be deepened and perfected in such a way that no trial will be too hard for it — but not yet: rather the hour cometh, and is come, when you shall all forsake Me in the time of My greatest need, and shall think only selfishly of yourselves. Yet, notwithstanding, even then, when to all appearance alone, I am not alone, for the Father is with Me.'

Ver. 33. These things I have spoken unto you that in me ye may have peace. In the world ye have tribulation; but be of good courage, I have overcome the world. 'These things' refers to all that had been spoken from chap. xiv. 1, to the thought of which beginning of His discourse Jesus now returns at its close. The present tense, 'ye have,' seems to indicate that tribulation is not merely a historical certainty, but the natural consequence of the position of the disciples in the world. It must, as well as will, be so. But what of that, 'Let not their hearts be troubled' (chap. xiv. 1). The world is a conquered foe. Jesus has overcome it; and that not for Himself only, but for them. His faithful disciples have still sorrow in the world, but their sorrow is turned into joy; they have still to wage a warfare in the world, but each part of the field resounds with their exulting shouts, and the very death which the world may bring to them is the gate of higher and more glorious life. The world is not to be overcome: it is overcome; and to those who follow in the footsteps of their Lord, the path through is not so much a conflict as a victory. As reapers in the harvest field, they rejoice together with Him who sowed (chap. iv. 36); as soldiers of the cross, they share the triumph of the Captain of their salvation.

## CHAPTER XVII. 1-26.

### *The Intercessory or High-priestly Prayer of Jesus.*

- 1 **T**HESE words<sup>1</sup> spake Jesus, and "lifted"<sup>2</sup> up his eyes to heaven, and<sup>3</sup> said, Father, the "hour"<sup>4</sup> is come; "glorify"<sup>5</sup> thy Son, that thy "Son" also<sup>6</sup> may glorify thee: As "thou" hast given<sup>6</sup> him power<sup>7</sup> over all flesh, that he should give "eternal" life to as many as "thou" hast given him.<sup>8</sup> And this is "life eternal,"<sup>9</sup> that they might "know"<sup>10</sup> thee "the only true God," and Jesus Christ, "whom thou hast sent."<sup>11</sup> "I have"<sup>12</sup> glorified thee on the earth: "I have finished"<sup>13</sup> the work which thou gavest<sup>14</sup> me to do. And now, O Father,<sup>15</sup> "glorify thou me"<sup>16</sup>
- <sup>1</sup> things  
<sup>2</sup> lifting  
<sup>3</sup> he  
<sup>4</sup> the  
<sup>5</sup> omit also  
<sup>6</sup> Even as thou gavest  
<sup>7</sup> authority  
<sup>8</sup> in order that all that which thou hast given him, he may give unto them  
<sup>9</sup> the eternal life  
<sup>10</sup> may learn to know  
<sup>11</sup> and him whom thou didst send, Jesus, as Christ  
<sup>12</sup> omit have  
<sup>13</sup> having accomplished  
<sup>14</sup> hast given  
<sup>15</sup> omit O Father  
<sup>16</sup> add O Father

<sup>a</sup> Chap. xi. 42.

<sup>b</sup> See chap. ii. 4.

<sup>c</sup> Chap. xii.

<sup>d</sup> Chap. xii.

<sup>e</sup> Chap. xii.

<sup>f</sup> Chap. xii.

<sup>g</sup> Chap. xii.

<sup>h</sup> Chap. xii.

<sup>i</sup> Chap. xii.

<sup>j</sup> Chap. xii.

<sup>k</sup> Chap. xii.

<sup>l</sup> Chap. xii.

<sup>m</sup> Chap. xii.

<sup>n</sup> Chap. xii.

<sup>o</sup> Chap. xii.

<sup>p</sup> Chap. xii.

<sup>q</sup> Chap. xii.

<sup>r</sup> Chap. xii.

<sup>s</sup> Chap. xii.

<sup>t</sup> Chap. xii.

<sup>u</sup> Chap. xii.

<sup>v</sup> Chap. xii.

- with thine own self with <sup>1</sup> the glory which I had with thee before the world was.
- 6 <sup>m</sup> I have <sup>18</sup> manifested thy name unto the men <sup>1</sup> which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; <sup>17</sup> and they have <sup>n</sup> kept thy word. Now they have known <sup>18</sup> that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee. <sup>19</sup> For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; <sup>20</sup> and they have <sup>18</sup> received *them*, and have known surely <sup>21</sup> that <sup>1</sup> I came out <sup>22</sup> from thee, and they <sup>2</sup> have <sup>23</sup> believed that thou <sup>1</sup> didst send me. I pray for <sup>24</sup> them: I pray not for <sup>25</sup> the world, but for <sup>26</sup> <sup>1</sup> them which thou hast given me; <sup>27</sup> they are thine. And all mine are thine, <sup>28</sup> and <sup>2</sup> thine are <sup>29</sup> mine; and <sup>3</sup> I am <sup>30</sup> glorified in them. <sup>4</sup> And now <sup>31</sup> I am no more <sup>32</sup> in the world, but these <sup>33</sup> are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, <sup>n</sup> keep through thine own name those whom <sup>34</sup> thou hast given me, <sup>v</sup> that they may be one, <sup>w</sup> as <sup>35</sup> we *are*. While <sup>36</sup> I was with them in the world, <sup>37</sup> I <sup>n</sup> kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, <sup>38</sup> and <sup>x</sup> none of them is lost, <sup>39</sup> but <sup>1</sup> the son of perdition; <sup>4</sup> that the scripture might be fulfilled. And now come I <sup>40</sup> to thee; and these things I speak in the world, <sup>a</sup> that they might <sup>41</sup> have my joy <sup>42</sup> fulfilled in themselves. For I have given them thy word; <sup>b</sup> and the world hath <sup>18</sup> hated them, because they are not of the world, <sup>c</sup> even as I am not of the world. I pray <sup>43</sup> not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that <sup>d</sup> thou shouldest keep them from the evil. <sup>44</sup> They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. <sup>e</sup> Sanctify <sup>45</sup> them through thy truth: <sup>46</sup> <sup>1</sup> thy word is truth. <sup>f</sup> As thou hast sent <sup>47</sup> me into the world, even so have <sup>48</sup> I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes <sup>49</sup> <sup>1</sup> I sanctify <sup>50</sup> myself, that they also might <sup>51</sup> be sanctified through the truth. <sup>52</sup>
- 20 Neither pray I for these alone, <sup>53</sup> but for them also <sup>54</sup> which shall <sup>55</sup> believe on <sup>56</sup> me through their word; <sup>1</sup> That they all may be one; <sup>2</sup> as <sup>57</sup> thou, Father, *art* in me, and I in thee, that

- <sup>17</sup> to me thou gavest them                      <sup>18</sup> Now have they learned to know  
<sup>19</sup> thou gavest me are from thee  
<sup>20</sup> Because the words which thou gavest me I have given them  
<sup>21</sup> and learned to know truly                      <sup>22</sup> forth                      <sup>23</sup> omit they have  
<sup>24</sup> I ask concerning                      <sup>25</sup> I ask not concerning                      <sup>26</sup> concerning  
<sup>27</sup> because                      <sup>28</sup> and all things that are mine are thine                      <sup>29</sup> omit are  
<sup>30</sup> have been                      <sup>31</sup> omit now                      <sup>32</sup> longer                      <sup>33</sup> and they  
<sup>34</sup> keep them in thy name which                      <sup>35</sup> even as                      <sup>36</sup> When                      <sup>37</sup> omit in the world  
<sup>38</sup> I kept them in thy name which thou hast given me, and I guarded them  
<sup>39</sup> and not one of them perished                      <sup>40</sup> But now I come                      <sup>41</sup> may  
<sup>42</sup> the joy that is mine                      <sup>43</sup> ask                      <sup>44</sup> out of the evil one                      <sup>45</sup> Consecrate  
<sup>46</sup> in the truth                      <sup>47</sup> Even as thou didst send                      <sup>48</sup> omit even so have  
<sup>49</sup> for them                      <sup>50</sup> consecrate                      <sup>51</sup> that they themselves also may  
<sup>52</sup> be consecrated in truth                      <sup>53</sup> But not concerning these only do I ask  
<sup>54</sup> but also concerning them                      <sup>55</sup> omit shall                      <sup>56</sup> in                      <sup>57</sup> even as

1 Chap. i. 1, 2, iii 13, xiii. 3, xvi. 28; 1 John i. 2. Ver. 26; Ps. xxii. 22.

2 Chap. viii. 51.

3 Chap. xv. 15

4 Chap. viii. 42, xiii. 3, xvi. 27, 28, 30. Ver. 21; chap. xi. 42. Chap. xvi. 15. 2 Thess. i. 10. Chap. xiii. 1.

5 Ver. 12; Jude 1. Vers. 21, 22, 23; Gal. iii. 28. Chap. x. 30.

6 Chap. vi. 39, xviii. 9. 2 Thess. ii. 3. See chap. vii. 38, xii. 38, xiii. 18; Acts i. 16, 20. Chap. xv. 11.

7 Chap. xv. 18, 19. Ver. 16; chap. viii. 23. Matt. vi. 13; 2 Thess. iii. 3; 1 John v. 18, 19. Chap. xv. 3; Eph. v. 26; 1 Pet. i. 22. Chap. viii. 40; 2 Sam. vii. 28. Ver. 3; chap. xx. 21. Comp. chap. x. 36; Heb. x. 10.

8 Vers. 11, 22, 23. Chap. xiv. 10.

they<sup>58</sup> also may be one<sup>59</sup> in us: that 'the world may<sup>60</sup> believe / Chap. i. 22.  
 22 that thou hast sent<sup>60</sup> me. And 'the glory which thou gavest<sup>61</sup> me I have given them; 'that they may be one, even as we are  
 23 one: I 'in them, and thou in me, that they may be made per- Chap. vi. 56,  
 fect in one; 'and<sup>62</sup> that 'the 'world may know<sup>63</sup> that thou xiv. 10, xv. 4.  
 hast sent<sup>60</sup> me, 'and hast loved<sup>64</sup> them, as<sup>65</sup> thou hast loved<sup>65</sup> Chap. xiv. 31.  
 24 me. Father, I will that they also, whom thou 'hast given me, q Chap. xiv. 21, 23, xvi  
 'be with me where I am; 'that they may behold my glory, 27.  
 which thou hast given me: 'for<sup>67</sup> thou lovedst me 'before the r Ver. 2.  
 25 foundation of the world. O<sup>68</sup> righteous Father, 'the world s Chap. xii. 26.  
 hath not known thee: 'but 'I have known thee,<sup>70</sup> and these  
 26 'have known<sup>71</sup> that thou hast sent<sup>60</sup> me. 'And I have  
 declared<sup>72</sup> unto them thy name, and will declare it: 'that the  
 love 'wherewith thou hast loved<sup>74</sup> me may be in them, and 'I  
 in them.

<sup>58</sup> add themselves      <sup>59</sup> omit one      <sup>60</sup> didst send      <sup>61</sup> hast given  
<sup>62</sup> may be perfected into one      <sup>63</sup> omit and      <sup>64</sup> learn to know      <sup>65</sup> lovedst  
<sup>66</sup> Father, what thou hast given me, I desire that where I am they also may  
be with me  
<sup>67</sup> because      <sup>68</sup> omit O      <sup>69</sup> both the world learned not to know thee  
<sup>70</sup> but I learned to know thee      <sup>71</sup> and these learned to know  
<sup>72</sup> And I made known      <sup>73</sup> will make it known      <sup>74</sup> lovedst

CONTENTS. The chapter on which we now enter contains what is generally known as our Lord's High-priestly Prayer. Such a name is appropriately given it; partly, because it is the longest and most solemn utterance recorded of the intercessions with which Jesus approached the throne of His heavenly Father on His people's behalf; partly, because He was at this moment standing on the threshold of His especial work as their great High Priest. No attempt to describe the prayer can give a just idea of its sublimity, its pathos, its touching yet exalted character, its tone at once of tenderness and triumphant expectation. We are apt to read it as if it were full of sorrow; but that is only our own feeling reflected back upon what we suppose to have been the feelings of the Man of Sorrows. In the prayer itself sorrow has no place; and to think that it was uttered in a tone of sadness is entirely to mistake what must have been the spirit of Jesus at the time. It speaks throughout of work accomplished, of victory gained, of the immediate expectation of glorious reward. It tells, not of sorrow, but of 'joy,' joy now possessing His own soul, and about to be 'fulfilled' in His disciples (ver. 13). It anticipates with perfect confidence the realisation of the grand object of His coming,—the salvation of all that have been given Him (ver. 12), their union to Himself and the Father (ver. 21), their security amidst the evils of this world while they execute in it a mission similar to His (vers. 11, 15, 18), and, finally, their glorification with His own glory (ver. 24). The prayer, in fact, corresponds closely with the words of its Utterer immediately preceding it, 'Be of good courage, I have overcome the world' (chap. xvi. 33). It is nothing less than a prolonged anticipation of the shout of triumph on the cross, 'It is finished' (chap. xix. 30).

The prayer divides itself naturally into three parts, in the first of which Jesus prays for Himself, in the second for His immediate disciples, in the third for all who, in every age, shall believe in Him. But the three parts are pervaded by one thought—the glorification of the Father in those successively prayed for, by the accomplishment in each of the Father's purpose, and the union of all in the perfect, the spiritual, the eternal bond of love. The subordinate parts of the chapter are thus—(1) vers. 1-5; (2) vers. 6-19; (3) vers. 20-26.

Ver. 1. *These things spake Jesus, and lifting up his eyes to heaven, he said.* Thus the Evangelist connects the prayer before us with the parting discourse contained in the previous chapters. It is offered in the same place, while the disciples stand around, and in the same frame of mind as that in which Jesus had just spoken; so that, when we read of His 'lifting up His eyes to heaven,' we must think of them as full alike of holy devotion and of the consciousness of completed victory.—*Father, the hour is come.* The first word of the prayer is 'Father;' not 'our Father' as in the Lord's Prayer, but simply 'Father,' and so throughout, though twice with 'righteous' or 'holy' connected with the name (vers. 5, 11, 21, 24, 25). The word sums up the peculiar revelation of this Gospel, and expresses the whole consciousness of that relation to God in which 'the only-begotten Son' stood, and would have us to stand. Yet it is not a word of tenderness only, but of authority and power: if it stirs affection, it awakens also reverence and awe. 'The hour' referred to is not merely that of death, or of death as a transition to glory; it is that in which the Son makes perfect the accomplishment of the Father's will (comp. chaps. ii. 4,

vii. 30, viii. 20, xiii. 32). This no doubt involves alike the death and the exaltation of Jesus, but it is the inner character of the hour, rather than its outward accompaniments, that is mainly referred to in the words 'The hour is come.'—**Glorify thy Son that the Son may glorify thee.** On the meaning of 'glorify' compare what has been said at chap. xiii. 31, 32. It is not a bestowal of personal glory for which Jesus prays, for such a thought would both be out of keeping with the mind of Him who never sought His own glory, and would compel us to understand the word 'glorify' in the first clause in a sense wholly different from any that can be given it in the second. What Jesus prays for is, that the Father would now withdraw the veil which had hitherto obscured to some, and concealed from others, the 'glory' belonging to the Son's unity of relation to the Father, in order that that 'glory' of the Father Himself, which is the end of all existence, and which can be seen only in the Son, may thus shine forth in the sight of His creatures without any shadow to dim its brightness. The former is the means, the latter is the end (comp. on chap. xi. 4). The transition from 'Thy Son' to 'the Son' is worthy of notice, the former including an appeal to personal relationship, the latter bringing especially into view the work by which Jesus 'declares' the Father (comp. chap. i. 18), and leads men into the condition and privileges of sonship (comp. chap. i. 12).

**Ver. 2. Even as thou gavest him authority over all flesh, in order that all that which thou hast given him, he may give unto them life eternal.** This verse is clearly connected with ver. 1. It unfolds the means by which the glorifying of the Father is to be accomplished; and the first clause corresponds to 'glorify Thy Son,' the second to 'that the Son may glorify Thee.' To the Son the Father gave authority over all flesh, that the Son on His part might give to them eternal life. The words 'all flesh' (the Old Testament expression for all men) here used are remarkable. No words could more powerfully bring out that universality which is so characteristic of this Gospel and this prayer; while, at the same time, they set before us the picture of all humanity, Gentile as well as Jewish, in its weakness and sinfulness, in its want of the power of the Spirit, in its separation from that spiritual and eternal life in which alone it accomplishes its destiny and attains to the completion of its joy. Over all men the Son received authority that if they would only listen to Him they might be saved: thus the Father glorifies the Son. By the execution of this mission, again, and by the giving of life eternal to all believers, the Son glorifies the Father. The commission, in short, was glory to the Son: the execution was glory to the Father; and the prayer is, that the loving purpose of the Father may be accomplished in the visible glory properly belonging to it. The peculiar structure of this verse, by which Jesus first presents those spoken of as a connected whole, and then proceeds to refer to them in their more individual aspect, has already been spoken of (see on chap. vi. 37); and in the commentary on the same passage we have also seen that under the words 'all that which Thou hast given Him,' we are not to think of any absolute, predestinating decree having no regard to the moral and spiritual character of those thus 'given.' Their moral and

spiritual state is rather the prominent thought; they are believers; they possess eternal life. It is true that this is to be traced to the 'drawing' of the Father. From Him alone comes every perfect gift; they are in themselves only weak and sinful flesh; but, at the stage at which we view them here, the working of prevenient grace is long since past; the Father has called them, and they have answered the call: then they are viewed as 'given.'

**Ver. 3. And this is the eternal life, that they may learn to know thee the only true God, and him whom thou didst send, Jesus, as Christ.** The article is used before 'eternal life' in order to carry our thoughts back to the 'life eternal' of ver. 2; and the conception involved in these words is now dwelt upon in meditation which finds utterance because of the disciples who heard (comp. chap. xi. 42). Therefore when Jesus, with His mind full of the thought of the glorification of the Father and the Son, speaks of the eternal life bestowed upon His people, He turns to the manner in which, through the reception of that life, such a glorification shall be effected by them. Two points must be kept in view while we endeavour to understand the words:—(1) The force of 'that'; this word sets before us the 'knowing' as a goal towards which we are to strain our efforts. (2) That the word 'know' does not mean to know fully or to recognise, but to learn to know: it expresses not perfect, but inceptive and ever-growing knowledge. Those, then, who receive 'eternal life' enter into a condition in which they learn to know the Father and the Son as They really are,—learn to know Them in Their love and saving mercy,—and are thus enabled to 'glorify' Them. The knowledge of the Father and the Son is neither the condition of the 'life,' nor the same thing as the 'life.' It is rather that far-off goal which is constantly before us, and to which we come ever nearer, in proportion as we enter more deeply into the life which Christ bestows. The 'life,' on the other hand, is that state in which we are introduced to the knowledge of the Father and the Son, the state in which we learn to know Them with constantly-increasing clearness and fulness, and finally the state in which, when life is perfected in us, we come to know Them as They are, to 'see' Them, and to 'be like' Them (comp. 1 John iii. 2). Strictly speaking, the knowledge is thus dependent on the life, rather than the life on the knowledge. But, in truth, the interdependence is mutual; neither can exist without the other; there is no life which does not lead to knowledge; there is no knowledge without life. The 'eternal life' is thus also a present thing, stretching indeed into the endless future, but begun now.

The constituents of the knowledge are also given. They are first to be viewed as two; and each has a distinguishing attributive connected with it. The first is God: He is the 'only true God.' We cannot exclude from these words the thought of a contrast to heathen divinities; for, as we have already seen on ver. 2, the Gentiles are here present to the mind of Him who prays for all that are to believe in Him. But, if so, we must recognise in them an allusion to the cardinal formula of Judaism, 'The Lord our God is one Lord' (Deut. vi. 4); and the force of such an allusion in its present use we shall see imme-

diately. In addition to this, however, the word 'true' has also its meaning *real*. This God whom we are to know is the foundation of all real being, the God in whom all things are that are, and thus as 'true' the 'only' God. The second constituent of the knowledge is Jesus: He is Christ,—God's anointed One, the Messiah. In a chapter where so much importance is attached to the word 'name,' we are justified in thinking that the name 'Jesus' is here regarded in its proper meaning of 'Saviour': it expresses what the word 'Me' would not express with anything like similar fulness. These two constituents of the knowledge spoken of are next to be viewed as one; for the fact that the words 'Him whom Thou didst send' precede the name 'Jesus,' as well as the whole teaching of this Gospel, suggests not the thought of God and Christ but of God *in* Christ, of God declaring Himself in Him whom He 'sent.' Herein, therefore, lies the truth, that the one God whom Israel so vainly boasted that it knew could only be 'known' in connection with, and by means of the knowledge of, Jesus. Hence, also, we need not wonder that Jesus here names Himself in the third Person instead of the first. He is giving expression in its most purely objective form to the sum of saving knowledge. To effect this the second clause mentioning this knowledge has to be combined with the first: it must, therefore, be presented not less objectively; and thus, seeing this knowledge as it were without Himself, our Lord speaks not of 'Me' but of 'Jesus.' Had such a use been unsuitable to prayer, it would be as difficult to account for it from the pen of the Evangelist (on the supposition that the words are remoulded by him) as from the lips of Jesus.<sup>1</sup>

Ver. 4. **I glorified thee on the earth, having accomplished the work which thou hast given me to do.** The first petition of Jesus in this prayer had been 'glorify Thy Son.' That petition is now to be repeated in a more emphatic form (ver. 5), but first we have a fuller statement of the ground on which it rests. In vers. 2, 3, the petition had been connected with the design of the Father; now it is connected with the accomplishment of that design; and the general prayer for glorification is to rise into the prayer 'Glorify Thou Me *now*.' This glorifying of the Father is said to have taken place 'on the earth,' that is, amidst the humiliations and sorrows of the Lord's earthly life. There in word, and deed, and suffering even unto death, Jesus revealed the Father's loving will for the salvation of men; there He accomplished the purpose for which the Father sent Him; there He glorified the Father. It will be observed that all is spoken of as past, for the whole work of Jesus is at this moment looked upon as finished. It is not indeed entirely finished, for He has not yet been nailed to the cross; but that final part of it may still be connected in thought with the whole suffering life, and may be spoken of as if it had been met. All

<sup>1</sup> The words of this verse are so important that it may be well to explain more fully in a note that in the clauses attached to 'learn to know' there is probably a fusion of two thoughts;

learn to know {that Thou art the only true God.

{Thee as the only true God.

learn to know {that Jesus whom Thou sentest is Christ.

{Jesus whom Thou sentest as Christ.

The predicative 'Christ' requires the verb to express knowledge of a fact: the impression given by the verse is that great stress belongs to 'know' in the sense of acquaintance with a Person.

the life of Jesus had been a death; in all of it He had been accomplishing His work and glorifying the Father: the one step still remaining, and already fully taken in will, may thus be easily associated with the rest, and the whole be contemplated as over. Therefore Jesus prays,

Ver. 5. **And now glorify thou me, O Father, with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.** The glory prayed for is distinguished by two particulars: (1) It is 'with Thine own Self' (comp. chap. xiii. 31, 32), in contrast with the words 'on earth' of ver. 4. (2) It is a glory that Jesus had possessed 'before the world was;' that is, from eternity. Thus the prayer is that the clouds which during His earthly life had obscured the glory of His Divine Sonship may be rolled back, and that as Son of man (as well as Son of God) it may now *appear* that He possesses that glory in all the brightness with which it encompassed Him before He came into the world (comp. on chap. xiii. 32). The word 'glory,' in short, is to be understood in the sense of glory to be manifested as well as in a sense expressing the contents of the glory; and the petition is for a bestowal of the manifested glory rather than of the original real glory considered in itself. Thus the unity of thought in the whole passage is preserved. Not the Son's personal exaltation, but the Father's glory through the Son's, is still the keynote; for, when the glory of the Son is seen the glory of the Father is seen also, and the less the obscurity resting on the former the less also that resting on the latter. With this petition the first section of the prayer closes.

Ver. 6. **I manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world.** Jesus now passes to the thought of those disciples who had been led to rest on Him in faith. His work was over: theirs was to begin; and it involved a struggle and needed strength, similar to His own. In tenderest pity and love, therefore, He now prays for them, that they may be preserved as He has been. Yet not their preservation (for its own sake), but the glory of the Father, is still the leading thought. Jesus is glorified in them (ver. 10), and we have already seen that when He is glorified the glorification of the Father is secured. First of all their position is described; they have so entered into and embraced the 'word' of Jesus that the great purpose of His coming has been answered in them, and they are fitted to take His place in the world. That 'word' had been especially the 'name' of God, His name as 'Father,' including His character, His attributes, His saving will as revealed in Jesus. The whole purpose of God's Fatherly love had been embraced by them as tidings of great joy both for themselves and for the world. They had been given to the Son by the Father 'out of the world;' that is, they were no longer in the world as the element of their existence. The position is exactly His own (ver. 14), so that even already we see how closely they are identified with Him, and are fitted, as taking His place, to lift men up into their own higher sphere. It is not enough, however, to say this, for the completeness with which the end has been attained has to be further brought out from two sides, the Divine and the human.—**Thine they were, and to me thou gavest them.** That is the Divine side. The change of order from the same words as used in the earlier part of the verse ought

to be noticed. The emphasis is now directed to 'Me,' and the meaning is that they were now by Divine appointment the Son's, that they might take up His work.—**And they have kept thy word.** This is the human side. They, on their part, had answered the purpose of the Father: they had kept the 'word' of God; not the general revelation of His will, but, if we may so speak, the revelation of the Logos, of the 'Word,' in the soul. In the Word of God they have God's word in them. How completely are they put into the position of Him who is now 'going away'!

Ver. 7. **Now have they learned to know that all things whatsoever thou gavest me are from thee.** These words do more than state that the disciples knew this fact. They include a far deeper meaning, intended to bring out more fully the position of the disciples as the representatives of Jesus. For what was it that *He* knew? What was the element of relation to the Father in which *He* lived? It was that all He had was from the Father; that all He was was the reflex of the Father; that His words, His works, His whole activity, were the Father's; that He came forth from the Father, and was sent by Him into the world (chaps. iii. 13, vi. 46, vii. 29, iii. 34, xiii. 3). This was the consciousness which especially distinguished Him in the fulfilling of His mission; and now that consciousness has passed over into them.

Ver. 8. **Because the words which thou gavest me I have given them, and they received them, and learned to know truly that I came forth from thee, and believed that thou didst send me.** These words explain the fact stated immediately before. The disciples had received a consciousness similar to that of Jesus, because He, on His part, had implanted His words in them; and they, on their part, had responded, receiving what He gave. They 'received,' 'learned to know,' 'believed': the three verbs, closely following each other in the same tense, correspond to the solemnity of the statement. Again, however, we see that far more is meant than the reception of particular truths: the main thought is, that He has transferred His own mind to His disciples, that He has taught them His own truths and thoughts, and that they, while retaining their own proper individuality (the word *they* before 'received' being equivalent to 'they themselves'), have fully made them their own.

Ver. 9. **I ask concerning them; I ask not concerning the world, but concerning them which thou hast given me.** In the preceding verses the mind of Jesus has been filled with the thought of the position of the disciples: He now proceeds directly to pray for them; and the substance of His prayer is that they, occupying His place, may be so preserved as to be what He had been,—true to the word given them, victorious over the devil, consecrated, filled with joy, to His glory and the glory of the Father in Him. So fully, too, are His thoughts occupied with them, that the whole energy of His prayer is devoted to them alone. He will not for the present ask concerning the enemy to be assailed, but about the assailants who are to take His place. Without denouncing the 'world,' therefore, He simply sets it aside. It may indeed be asked, Why mention it at all? The answer probably is, to bring out that perfect correspondence between the will of the Son and of the Father, which is the ground

of the Son's confidence in prayer. Hence the emphatic 'I' with which the verse begins,—'I, who came forth from the Father, who am sent of the Father (ver. 8); I, who am the perfect expression of the Father, willing only what He wills,—I do not go beyond those whom He has given Me.' This last thought then finds utterance.—**Because they are thine.** In ver. 6 it had been 'They were thine': then they had been looked at only as the possession of the Father. Now 'they are thine': they have been brought back to Him and united to Him in a closer, dearer bond than ever,—the bond of fellowship in the Son.

Ver. 10. **And all things that are mine are thine, and thine mine, and I have been glorified in them.** It does not seem necessary to regard the two first clauses of this verse as a parenthesis, and to restrict the last words 'in them' to the disciples only who had been spoken of in ver. 9. Jesus seems rather to be carried away, by the thought that disciples one with Him were as truly one with His Father, to another and a more glorious thought, that all that He possessed was His Father's and all that was His Father's was His, so real, so intimate, so deep is the unity between Them. In all things, then, though (it may be) especially in His disciples, He has been glorified. But His being glorified in them is really the Father's being so, because the glory flows from their recognition of Him, and their fellowship with Him, as the Son. It is not, therefore, because they glorify Himself that He is to pray for their being kept by the Father, but because the promotion of His glory is the promotion of the Father's glory. From every thought of the prayer we must ascend to the Father, that glorious Name in which, with its blended authority and love, are given the order and the happiness of all creation.

Ver. 11. **And I am no longer in the world, and they are in the world, and I come to thee.** One thought rising before the mind of Jesus now deepens His earnestness of entreaty on behalf of His disciples,—the contrast between their condition and His own. His labours and sorrows are over, but *they* are left behind in the struggle which He is leaving. The very greatness of His joy in the thought of His own glorious return to His Father rouses His tenderest sympathy for those who have so much to do and to suffer before they can share His joy.—**Holy Father, keep them in thy name which thou hast given me, that they may be one even as we are.** In ver. 1 we had simply 'Father': we have now 'Holy' prefixed to that name. The reason is obvious. 'Holy' does not express mere freedom from sin; He who is holy is entirely separated from all that is carnal and outward in this present world, so that pure spirituality and heavenliness alone rule in Him. As, therefore, a state similar to this is that to which God would raise His people, the epithet 'Holy' brings this thought prominently into view, and strengthens the argument of the prayer. The petition is that, for the purpose mentioned in the last words of the verse, they may be kept in the Father's name which He has given to the Son. Light is again thrown upon the word 'name.' It cannot be simply the name 'Father,' for that could not be given to another: it is His revelation of Himself in Jesus. That revelation had been given to the Son; it had been appropriated by the disciples; they were living in it; the prayer

is that, amidst all the temptations of the world, they may be kept in it. Then follows the purpose, that they may be one 'even as' are the Father and the Son. It is the Divine unity of love that is referred to, all wills bowing in the same direction, all affections burning with the same flame, all aims directed to the same end—one blessed harmony of love.

Ver. 12. **When I was with them, I kept them in thy name which thou hast given me, and I guarded them, and not one of them perished, but the son of perdition, that the scripture might be fulfilled.** It is out of the fulness of His heart that Jesus continues to speak. The sad change that is to take place in the condition of His disciples after He has 'gone away' presses on His mind; He recalls tenderly the care with which He had hitherto watched over them in an evil world; and now that He can no longer show that care, He commends them with longing earnestness to the Father. He does this all the more because it was in the Father's name given to Himself that He had kept them,—in the revelation of the Father, in the unity of His own relation to the Father, in the consciousness that God was their Father as well as His; so that the Father as well as He shall keep them, and, in keeping them, shall only continue the work that He had Himself begun. The word 'I' is very emphatic,—'I kept them: now do Thou.' The distinction between 'kept' and 'guarded' is not to be found in the thought of different spheres, such as inward and outward, to which it may be supposed that the words apply; but in the fact that the latter word points to the watchfulness by which the former is attained (comp. on chap. xii. 47). At the same time the difference of tense in the original is worthy of notice, the first verb expressing *continued* care, the second the *completeness* of the security afforded. Yet one dark cloud rested on the bright past, and the eyes of the disciples might at that moment be directed to it. Judas had not been kept: how was that? To this Jesus gives an answer in these words. The wonderful fact itself, when rightly viewed, affords evidence that He has fulfilled His promise that He will keep His own. It was in carrying out the Father's will that not one of the Eleven had been lost: it was in carrying out the same will that Judas had met his fate. He was 'the son of perdition,' one who had freely chosen to move in that sphere of perishing, and therefore he perished. A scripture, too, or word of God (Ps. xli. 9, already quoted in chap. xiii. 18), had declared God's will, and that will could not fail to be accomplished. To suppose that Judas is now brought before us as one originally doomed to perdition, and that his character was but the evolving of his doom, would contradict not only the meaning of the Hebraic expression 'son of' (which always takes for granted moral choice), but the whole teaching of this Gospel. In no book of the New Testament is the idea of will, of choice on the part of man, brought forward so repeatedly and with so great an emphasis. The history of man is taken up at that point when God's previous dealings with him have prepared him for the exercise of a choice in which his responsibility shall appear. How far this previous discipline is the result of absolute decree is not said; but the very fact that it is *discipline* implies that the result might have been other than it is. They in whom the Father's

object is attained are those 'given' to the Son, and Judas, therefore, was not one so 'given.' (On the construction here compare what was said on chap. iii. 13.)

Ver. 13. **But now I come to thee.** These words are to be connected with what follows rather than with what precedes. The thought of His immediate departure leads Jesus to pray that His disciples may be filled with a joy independent of His personal presence,—'in themselves.'—**And these things I speak in the world, that they may have the joy that is mine fulfilled in themselves.** The words 'these things I speak' refer to more than the fact that Jesus is at present praying,—to more even than the actual petition at present on His lips. He has in view the *substance* of His prayer, continually taught by Him. His 'joy' was fulfilled in this, that the name of His Father had been given Him, that He realised the unity with His Father in which He stood. He had led the disciples to the consciousness that they too were in that name of the Father, and by that means the joy that was His had become theirs,—it was 'fulfilled' in them. In answering this His prayer the Father will only be accomplishing His own plan, and securing His own glory through the glorification of the disciples in the Son. 'In the world' does not mean merely 'upon earth,' but in the midst of the efforts of the world to defeat the purpose of Jesus.

Ver. 14. **I have given them thy word; and the world hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.** The prayer for preservation is over: our Lord now speaks of the work of His disciples in the world. In ver. 8 He had said 'the words (or sayings) which Thou gavest me I have given them,' and the statement had been immediately followed by a declaration of their *personal* faith. Here He says 'I have given them Thy word,' and the statement is followed by a declaration that the world hated them. We see at once the advance of thought. The disciples have received the Father's word for *utterance*; and, as a natural consequence, the world, which might have known nothing of them had they only nourished their faith in secret, becomes their persecutor. How closely are they again identified by Jesus with Himself: they have not only His peace, His joy, but His work,—the very peace, the very joy that filled His soul, the very work in which He died.

Ver. 15. **I ask not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them out of the evil one.** The disciples are in the world, and Jesus cannot yet pray that they may be taken out of it, for it is the very purpose of the Father that they shall be left in it to carry on His work. What He does pray for is, that, as their work and His will be identical, so also their preservation may be identical, with His own. The element distinguishing His preservation had been that mentioned in chap. xiv. 30,—a total separation between the prince of this world and Him. The same complete separation He would now have for them,—not merely that they may be delivered from attacks of the evil one, but also that they may be kept 'out of' him, may have no fellowship with him, no weakening of their testimony by yielding to him, but may be single, pure, and faithful to the last as He had been. The expression 'to be kept out of the evil one' may surprise the reader until he re-

members that in 1 John v. 19, 20 the Apostle really speaks of the world as lying 'in the evil one.' The teaching of this Gospel and of the whole New Testament is that there are two spheres in which man may live, that of the world and its prince, and that of 'Jesus Christ.' (Compare the many passages which speak of the Christian as 'in Christ.') Our prayer ought to be, not that we may be kept 'from' the one, but that we may be kept 'out of' the one and 'in' the other.

Ver. 16. **They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.** These words met us in ver. 14, but they are again introduced in a slightly different order, the emphasis being now thrown on 'of the world,' in order to prepare the way for the complete antithesis to be immediately expressed.

Ver. 17. **Consecrate them in the truth: thy word is truth.** The word here rendered 'Consecrate' is constantly used in the Greek translation of the Old Testament to express the entire dedication and consecration both of persons and of things to God. In this sense, but with the deeper meaning of inward and spiritual consecration, we find it here. It is thus, when applied to persons, not less but more than sanctification, the latter being implied before the former can take place. The word corresponds to the attribute prefixed to 'Father' in ver. 11 (for which, however, we have in English no other word than 'holy'): the same word, too, is used by Jesus of Himself in chap. x. 36. To be consecrated is, therefore, to be separated from the world, to be dedicated as a holy thing to God. This is to be done 'in the truth,'—in that sphere of the truth which is the sphere of the Father and of the Son; in living communion with, and appropriation of, the truth, so that the truth shall be that in which their whole being is moulded and consecrated. This meaning of 'the truth' is then more fully brought out by the statement, 'Thy word is truth.' Here by 'word' we are not to understand the word of God in general, but the word already spoken of in ver. 14,—that special word of the Father which is found in His revelation of Himself in the Son, the Word. And this word is 'truth' in its most absolute sense, truth which finds concrete expression in 'the truth.' It is the 'truth' that came by Jesus Christ,—not merely truth in opposition to error, but the eternal reality of things in contrast with that which is unsubstantial and shadowy, that which must pass away.

Ver. 18. **Even as thou didst send me into the world, I also sent them into the world.** Jesus has prayed for the consecration of His disciples in the truth, and He now speaks of the necessity that existed for it. They have been sent into the world (the sending is viewed as already accomplished) 'even as' He had been sent into the world. Not merely is the *fact of sending* similar, but they are sent by the Son with the same commission as that with which the Son Himself had been sent by the Father. They are to 'declare' the Father as He had done, and to make the same revelation of eternal truth, of eternal love, to a sinful world. How much, then, did they need a consecration like His! But not only so. There is a further ground upon which His prayer 'or their consecration rests.

Ver. 19. **And for them I consecrate myself, that they themselves also may be consecrated in truth.** It was for the very purpose of bringing

them to a consecration like His own that His whole work of love and sacrifice had been freely undertaken. He might have said 'I was consecrated,' a thought which has its perfect parallel in chap. x. 36. But He speaks of consecrating Himself, partly because He entered into His consecration with perfect acquiescence and freedom; partly, perhaps mainly, because He is thinking of that High-priestly work of His which was now immediately impending. (It will be observed that the proleptic form of expression is not always maintained: see ver. 13.) The following words express, with special reference to the disciples, the end which Jesus had been desirous to attain. It is that their consecration might be the exact counterpart of His ('they also'); that they might act in it a free and independent part, devoting themselves in personal faith to the task assigned them ('they themselves'), and that all might be done 'in truth,'—not simply truly, but in conformity with the real, the essential, the everlasting (comp. on ver. 17). Finally, let us notice that the consecration spoken of is, alike in the case of Jesus and of His disciples, not a process but an act completed at once,—in His case, when, gathering together in one view all His labours and sufferings, He presented them a living sacrifice to His Father: in theirs, when they are in like manner enabled to present themselves as living sacrifices in His one perfect sacrifice.

Thus the second section of the prayer closes, its main burden having been that the disciples, who are about to be sent forth into the world in order to carry on the work of Jesus there, and who for this purpose have had the name of the Father manifested to them that they may know the Father, and the word of the Father given them that they may proclaim the Father, may be preserved by the Father from the world, and may be enabled to exhibit a perfect consecration to the Father's work. Thus shall the Father be glorified in them as He had been glorified in the Son, who accomplished the work that had been given Him to do.

Ver. 20. **But not concerning these only do I ask, but also concerning them which believe in me through their word.** From the thought of the disciples whom He was sending forth to carry on His work, Jesus now turns, in the third and last section of His prayer, to the thought of all who through their word shall be brought to faith, to the thought of believers in every country and in every age. They are spoken of as those 'which believe,'—not indeed in actual fact, for none had as yet believed through the instrumentality of the disciples; but in idea they rise before the mind of Jesus,—His Church down to the very end of time. The 'word' spoken of is that of ver. 14, the special word which is the revelation of the Father, and which brings man to recognise the love of the Father as it appears in the Son, and in the Son to them.

Ver. 21. **That they all may be one, even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they themselves also may be in us.** The petition on behalf of all believers follows in these words, and their last clause expresses it in its highest form. The second 'that' is neither parallel to the first, nor is the sentence to be inverted, as if it ran, 'that they themselves also may be in us as Thou, Father, art in Me and I in Thee.' It is dependent on the words coming immediately



before, and thus brings forward the final purpose of the Incarnation of the Eternal Son, and of that whole work of His by which our human nature was perfected into union with the Divine nature,—that believing men may be taken into the same glorious unity. The unity spoken of, then, is not merely that of Christians among themselves, whether outward or inward. It is unity in the Father and the Son, effected by that 'word' regarding the Son in the Father and the Father in the Son which has been appropriated in faith, and which produces a result corresponding to itself. It is what is known by divines as the 'mystical union'; yet in it believers maintain their own personality and freedom, for such is the force of 'they themselves.'—**That the world may believe that thou didst send me.** The first 'that' here is not to be connected with a verb so far removed as 'I ask' of ver. 20. It is a word of purpose, marking the ultimate result of the fulfilment of the prayer. And this result is that the 'world,' now the enemy of the truth, may be brought to faith. Although (ver. 9) Jesus had not prayed for the world, because He was praying for those who were to act upon it, He was not forgetful of its need. It was the world that He had come to save; and, although it rejected and crucified Him, He looked onward to a time when, as 'greater works' were done by His disciples than He Himself had done (chap. xiv. 12), the world would own the Divine power appearing in them, and the Divine origin of His mission. It is the spiritual life of the Church, however, that (so far as has yet been spoken of) is to effect this end. Her unity is included, but it does not receive its special emphasis till we come to ver. 23. Her spirituality is mainly before us here, that life which her members live, not conformed to the world,—not coming down to the level of the world, with the vain idea that thus they shall bring the world nearer them, but ever rising as far as possible above the world, dwelling in the Father and in the Son, a city of God, from which even now there streams light that shall kindle light in hearts that have been formed for light and life like its own.

Ver. 22. **And the glory which thou hast given me I have given them, that they may be one even as we are one.** Jesus had prayed that all believers might be one as He and the Father were one. He now turns to what He Himself had done that He might effect this end. We have already seen that the 'glory' referred to is that of self-sacrificing love, brought out from amidst the taunts with which men met it when displayed in Jesus, and owned by the Father as the only true glory. Such a glory Jesus had given to His people that, in living fellowship with the Father and the Son, they may be one in Them. Not worldly honour or station, the favour of kings, the patronage of statesmen, or the wealth of nations, was their glory; but the gift to love, and to sacrifice themselves for the world's good. Then in that love would they be one, even as the Father and the Son are one.

Ver. 23. **I in them, and thou in me, that they may be perfected into one.** That is: not only that this oneness may be reached, but that, in its being so, the last step to be taken with believers may be accomplished, the final issue and perfecting of all that Jesus has to do for them. Whereupon follows again the effect to be produced upon

'he world, stated, however, in a fuller form than in ver. 21.—**That the world may learn to know that thou didst send me, and lovedst them even as thou lovedst me.** The substitution of 'learn to know' here for 'believe' in ver. 21 is remarkable. The two words cannot be understood to signify the same thing, nor can the latter, in conformity with the style of this Gospel, express less than the former. In one way or another there must be an advance of thought. We see this in the addition of the clause, 'lovedst them even as Thou lovedst Me.' A similar advance must be traced on the point immediately before us. Chap. xiv. 31 appears to solve the difficulty. There the same word is used as in the present verse, and we are thus invited to extend our thoughts beyond the number of those who shall be led to faith. The whole world shall recognise what Jesus speaks of: even they who do not confess in faith shall confess in shame, that He whom they rejected was the loved of the Father, and that He has gathered His people into the same blessed unity of love.

It is in this verse that the unity of the followers of Jesus is peculiarly dwelt upon. Their spirituality is accompanied by its highest result when it is perfected into unity; and with this result is connected the most powerful impression which they make upon the world. It is therefore a *visible* unity for which Jesus prays. His Church is visible; and that idea of an invisible Church, in which Christians seek an escape from the sentence of condemnation which their divisions compel them to pronounce upon themselves, finds as little countenance in these verses as in any other part of Scripture.

Ver. 24. **Father, what thou hast given me, I desire that where I am they also may be with me, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me, because thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.** Having prayed for the spirituality and unity of all His disciples, Jesus now, in the closing petitions of His prayer, passes to the thought of their complete deliverance from the troubles of the world, and of their entrance with Him upon that glory with which He Himself was about to be glorified. It is difficult to translate the Greek verb rendered 'I will' in the Authorised Version. 'I will' is too strong; perhaps 'I desire' comes nearest to the original. The peculiar structure of the verse, in which the clause 'what Thou hast given Me' is so remarkably thrown forward, arises from the fact that believers are viewed not so much distributively as in the unity immediately present to the Redeemer's mind. It is the perfect glory of Jesus not only as Son of God but also as Son of man that is spoken of,—His glory shining forth in undimmed brightness in the heavenly world. There is the true home of His being; and hence not 'I shall be,' but 'I am,' as in chap. xiv. 3. Again, however, we must remember that this 'glory' is not that of outward estate. It is the spiritual glory of perfect union with the Father, seen and shared in apart from the shadows of earth. Hence the last words of the verse do not contain a statement of the ground upon which Jesus prays for His own, but of the nature of the glory which they are to behold when the ineffable, everlasting love of the Father to the Son is seen by them poured forth on Him who has taken the human nature into perfect union with the Divine. That had not been *beheld* in the Man of Sorrows:

it shall be *beheld* when—His sorrows over, but His humanity as true as it had been upon the earth—He is crowned with glory. The full, the perfect love of God will then be seen to have embraced humanity in its tenderest outgoings, and the joy of the redeemed in the vision and fruition of that love will be complete (comp. on ver. 22).

Ver. 25. *Righteous Father, both the world learned not to know thee,—but I learned to know thee,—and these learned to know that thou didst send me.* Not in the last clause of ver. 24, but now, we have the ground upon which Jesus prays that the 'glory' of which He has spoken may be conferred upon His people; and it connects itself not so much with the love as with the righteousness of God. It is just and right that those who have been prepared for the glory to be beheld should at last obtain it. Hence 'Righteous' (not as in ver. 11, 'Holy') 'Father.' For God as Father is not merely love, but love resting on perfect rectitude,—is One who will see that what befalls His creatures corresponds to what they are. The word 'both' here perplexes commentators, but is to be explained by what seems to be the usage of this Gospel (comp. chap. xv. 24), in which propositions subordinate to the principal statement are thus introduced; while, at the same time, like a dark background, they bring out the main thought with greater force. In the present instance this thought is contained in the last clause of the verse, and it is made more noteworthy by the fact stated in the first. The intermediate clause, again, 'but I learned to know Thee,' appears to be designed to lead us up to the main proposition following. It was because Jesus knew the Father that He had been able to communicate that knowledge to His people. Because they had received this knowledge, therefore, it was fitting that the love into which, along with the knowledge, they had entered, should bring to them its full reward, and should shine upon them as it shone upon the Son in whom they had renounced the world and the world's ways. It may, indeed, at first sight startle us to find Jesus using such words of Himself as that He 'learned to know' the Father. But (1) it has to be borne in mind that 'learned to know' is not in every respect a perfectly satisfactory translation of the original; it only approaches much more nearly to the truth than 'knew.' The proper meaning would be 'got knowledge,' or 'came to know.' (2) There is nothing more startling in the statement than in that of the Epistle to the Hebrews (chap. v. 8), 'Yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered.' There, indeed, we have another and a separate word for 'learned;'

but a process, a progress, is also implied in the word of the verse before us. The writer to the Hebrews speaks of an *experimental* learning of obedience by One who was possessed of a truly human, as well as of a Divine nature,—not the will to obey becoming more perfect, but actual obedience being practically more and more learned in the varying duties and trials of life. So here, He who was human as well as Divine 'learned,' *practically and experimentally*, 'to know' the Father; and it was because He so learned that He was able to communicate that knowledge—His own knowledge—to His people. Knowledge such as that spoken of can be acquired by *us* in no other way; and we have repeatedly seen, in considering this prayer, that what Jesus bestows upon His disciples is first His own.

Ver. 26. *And I made known unto them thy name, and will make it known, that the love wherewith thou lovedst me may be in them, and I in them.* The thought of ver. 25 is now more fully expressed, and, with it, the result to which the knowledge spoken of conducts all believers is summed up in the one word inclusive of every blessing, both for time and for eternity,—love. How exhaustive is the mode in which Jesus teaches the 'name' of God, the revelation of the Father in the Son,—'I made it known to them; they know; I shall make it known to them!' It is the expression of complete revelation, similar—so far as in such a matter we may speak of similarity—to 'Which was, and is, and is to come.' Therefore there naturally follows to all who embrace this revelation a perfect entering into that of which it tells, into that love which unites the Father and the Son, and which shall be in them, as Jesus Himself shall be in them, the unbroken rest of 'peace' after the toils, the eternal sunshine of 'joy' after the sorrows, of the world.

Thus the third section of the prayer closes, its main burden having been that the whole Church of God, believers of every age and country, may be so brought to and kept in the unity of the Father and the Son that the glory of the Son in the Father may be theirs. For then, the conflicts of this world ended, they shall be partakers of the fulness of that love of the Father which shall encompass them as it encompassed the Son before the foundation of the world,—pure, undimmed, undisturbed by the presence of either sin or sorrow,—the Father in the Son and the Son in them, all in perfect holiness and blessedness consummated into One. Thus, too, shall the end of all be attained, the glorifying of Him 'of whom and through whom and to whom are all things.'

## CHAPTER XVIII. 1-11.

### *The Betrayal by Judas.*

- 1 **W**HEN Jesus had spoken these words,<sup>1</sup> "he went forth with his disciples over <sup>b</sup> the brook Cedron,<sup>2</sup> where was  
2 a garden, into the which he entered,<sup>3</sup> and his disciples. And
- <sup>1</sup> things      <sup>2</sup> the winter-torrent Kidron      <sup>3</sup> add himself

<sup>a</sup> Matt. xxvi.  
30, 36; Mark  
xiv 26, 32;  
Luke xxii. 39.  
<sup>b</sup> 2 Sam. xv. 23.

Judas also, which betrayed him, knew the place: <sup>c</sup> for Jesus <sup>c</sup> Luke xxi. 37, xxii. 39. oftentimes resorted <sup>d</sup> thither with his disciples. <sup>d</sup> Judas then, <sup>d</sup> Matt. xxvi. 47-56; Mark xiv. 43-50; Luke xxii. 47-53. having received a band of *men*<sup>e</sup> and <sup>e</sup> officers from the chief priests and <sup>f</sup> Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches <sup>f</sup> Chap. vii. 32. and weapons. Jesus therefore, <sup>g</sup> knowing all <sup>g</sup> things that should <sup>g</sup> See chap. ii. 24. come <sup>h</sup> upon him, went forth, and said <sup>h</sup> unto them, Whom seek ye? They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am *he*. And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood <sup>i</sup> with them. As soon then as he had said <sup>i</sup> unto them, I am <sup>j</sup> *he*, they went backward, and fell to the ground. Then asked he them again,<sup>11</sup> Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus answered, I have <sup>k</sup> told you that I am *he*: <sup>k</sup> if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way: That the saying <sup>l</sup> might be fulfilled, which he spake,<sup>l</sup> Of them which <sup>l</sup> Chap. xvii. 12 thou gavest me have I lost none.<sup>14</sup> Then Simon Peter <sup>m</sup> having a sword drew it, and smote the high priest's servant, and cut off <sup>n</sup> his right ear. The <sup>n</sup> servant's name was Malchus. Then said Jesus <sup>o</sup> unto Peter, Put up thy <sup>o</sup> sword into the sheath: <sup>o</sup> the <sup>o</sup> Matt. xx. 12 cup which my <sup>o</sup> Father hath given me, shall I <sup>o</sup> not drink it? <sup>o</sup> xxvi. 39, 42.

<sup>4</sup> assembled<sup>5</sup> Judas therefore having received the band of soldiers<sup>6</sup> add the<sup>7</sup> that were coming<sup>8</sup> saith<sup>9</sup> was standing<sup>10</sup> When therefore he said<sup>11</sup> Again therefore he asked them<sup>12</sup> omit have<sup>13</sup> word<sup>14</sup> Those which thou hast given me, I lost not one of them.<sup>15</sup> Simon Peter therefore<sup>16</sup> And the<sup>17</sup> Jesus therefore said<sup>18</sup> the<sup>19</sup> should I

CONTENTS. With the beginning of this chapter we enter upon a new section of the Gospel, extending to the close of chap. xix. The section contains the final assault of the devil and the world upon Jesus. But the struggle is of a kind entirely different from that contained in the fourth or leading section of the Gospel, chaps. v.-xii. There Jesus contended with His foes. Here He submits Himself into their hands, and they appear to be the conquerors. Yet they are not really so. God Himself takes up the cause of His Son, and so bears witness to Him, that all the suffering which He endures is but a 'lifting on high,' and that the death upon the cross is victory. The first paragraph of this section records the betrayal by Judas, and the seizure of Jesus by the officers of the chief priests and Pharisees accompanied by the Roman soldiers.

VER. 1. When Jesus had spoken these things, he went forth with his disciples over the winter-torrent Kidron. The last discourse of Jesus to His disciples and His intercessory prayer to His Father have been spoken; and, from the upper room in which we have already seen that this took place, Jesus now 'went forth' to meet the fate that had been prepared for Him. More than this seems, however, to be expressed by the word 'went forth.' It is the solemn word by which the Evangelist would express the free surrender of Himself by Jesus to His approaching fate (comp. its use in ver. 4). It is the continuation of His 'going forth' from the Father (chap. viii. 42).

Descending the steep slope then which here leads from the temple-mount into the valley bounding Jerusalem on the east, Jesus first crossed the brook which flowed down the valley, although in a course at that date much nearer the temple walls than is indicated by its present channel. Some doubt exists as to the precise meaning of the name given to the brook. The Greek words may signify either 'The Kidron' or 'The Cedars,' there being evidence to show that a tree of dark foliage, probably a species of cedar, is known in the Talmud by the name *Cedrun*. The first signification seems, however, to be the more probable, and the apparently plural termination of the original may be easily explained: it is the Grecising of the Aramaic name ending in 'on,' as *Enon*, *Kishon*, *Arnon*. The context compels us to ask whether the name is used only in its geographical force, or whether it is associated in the Evangelist's mind with any of those deeper ideas so often connected by him with names. The epithet affixed to it guides us to a solution of this question. It is the only occasion on which in the New Testament the term 'winter-torrent' is applied to the Kidron, a term derived from that word 'winter' which we have already found used in this Gospel with a reference deeper than to the season of the year (chap. x. 22); while in the Old Testament it is the symbol of tribulation, trial, and judgment (Ps. xviii. 4, cx. 7, cxxiv. 4; Jer. xlvii. 2). The Hebrew name Kidron again is derived from a verb signifying to be black or dirty, hence to mourn or to be distressed, mourners

being wont to cover themselves with sackcloth and ashes (Ps. xxxv. 13, 14, xxxviii. 6, xlii. 9, xliii. 2). Putting these considerations together, we cannot doubt that the Evangelist sees in the Kidron the stream of trouble, the 'winter-torrent' of sorrow and affliction. If we may suppose that the stream took its name from the dark colour given to its waters by the blood of the sacrifices drained off into its course from the temple-mount, the meaning involved in the language before us will be still more striking. It was over this brook that David passed in the darkest hour of his history, that in which he fled from Absalom (2 Sam. xv. 23). When, accordingly, we observe that the quotation in John xiii. 18 is from a Psalm (Ps. xli.) in which the events of that sad day are commemorated, and that the quotation is made in illustration of these last scenes of the life of Jesus, it seems clear that we are invited to behold in this crossing of the black mountain-torrent the crossing of the true

David, 'the King of Israel' (chap. xii. 13), in the hour of a still deeper anguish than that in which His great prototype had been involved.—Where was a garden, into the which he entered, himself and his disciples. The garden is that of Gethsemane; not so much a garden in our sense of the word as an orchard, a garden with trees, and these, as appears from the derivation of its Hebrew name, olives. Peculiar attention is drawn to the leading person of the scene by the addition of the word 'Himself.'

Ver. 2. And Judas also, which betrayed him, knew the place: for Jesus oftentimes assembled thither with his disciples. The 'ofttimes' must refer to many previous visits to the garden, and not to those connected with the present brief sojourn in Jerusalem. The omission at this point of all mention of the 'Agony' in the garden has often occasioned great surprise, and been even used as an argument against the fidelity of the



Vale of the Cedron.

narrative of the Fourth Gospel. Yet it may be observed — (1) That, while the supplementary theory (see Introduction) cannot, as a whole, be received in explanation of the structure of our Gospel, it is quite natural to think that the Evangelist may have felt himself justified in the omission of particular scenes, because he was aware that they were already well known, through his predecessors, to the Church. (2) That his relation of the similar mental conflict and prayer in chap. xii.—a relation in which he stands alone—made it both more possible and more natural for him to omit this section here. (3) That his object being now to bring prominently forward the calm majesty with which Jesus met His final sufferings, he was led to select those parts of His actions and words which peculiarly illustrate this, and to say nothing of other parts by which the picture might seem to be disturbed. Such a proceeding is consistent with the most perfect faithfulness. It was not the

aim of any one of the Evangelists to present us with a complete narrative of all the life of Jesus, or of all the aspects of His character and work. Each drew rather out of His infinite fulness what was peculiarly appropriate to the design which he had himself in view, or to the range in which he felt himself called upon to work. What we have to ask is not that each shall tell us all, but that the several narratives shall not be inconsistent with each other. No such inconsistency can be urged here. The Agony is the illustration of the words, 'O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me:' the narrative before us is the illustration of the words, 'Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt;' and we know that both these sentences were uttered at the same moment by the lips of Jesus (Matt. xxvi. 39).

Ver. 3. Judas therefore having received the band of soldiers, and officers from the chief priests and the Pharisees, cometh thither with

lanterns and torches and weapons. The circumstances here mentioned are in contrast with those of ver. 1, constituting the obverse side of the picture, before the 'went forth' of that verse is again taken up in ver. 4, and thus illustrating the same principles of structure as those which met us in the opening verses of chap. xiii. The general situation is set before us from its two different sides: the first consisting of (1) Jesus, (2) His disciples; the second, of (1) Judas, (2) the band of soldiers, etc. The mention of 'the band' has been made an object of ridicule, as if it could only mean 'half a Roman army.' The ridicule is groundless, for—(1) Even if we allow, what it is extremely possible was not the case, that the band was of its full strength, it was after all only the same as the 'cohort,' the tenth part of a legion. (2) The Romans in all probability did not think of one man only to be made prisoner, but of the danger of a popular tumult. (3) In Acts xxiii. 23 we have a remarkable instance of the number of soldiers used upon a similar occasion. As the band now mentioned was obtained from the Roman authorities, we see that, from an early period of the night, they must have been led to interest themselves in the transactions taking place. The 'officers' were the servants of the chief priests and Pharisees. The trees of the garden made 'lanterns and torches' necessary. Although the moon was near the full, the Jews would imagine that Jesus might hide Himself in the covert and so escape.

Ver. 4. **Jesus therefore, knowing all the things that were coming upon him, went forth.** It is in the full knowledge of all that was about to happen that Jesus speaks and acts. In this knowledge He 'went forth,' not merely out of the garden, or out of the shade of the trees into the moonlight, or out of the circle of the disciples, but (taking up again the 'went forth' of ver. 1) to the fulfilment of the Divine purpose. At this instant the kiss of Judas mentioned by the first two Evangelists was given (Matt. xxvi. 49; Mark xiv. 45).—**And saith unto them, Whom seek ye?** The object in all probability was partly to allow them to take Him, His hour being now come; partly to direct attention to Himself, so that the disciples might escape.

Ver. 5. **They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth.** The answer may perhaps reveal the light in which Judas had represented Jesus to the Roman authorities,—'of Nazareth,' a Galilean, prone to revolt; or it may be that the Evangelist beholds in it one of those unconscious prophecies of the enemies of Jesus of which we have so many examples in this Gospel. In chap. i. 45, 'Jesus of Nazareth' is one of the three great aspects in which we are led to expect that we shall behold the Redeemer.—**Jesus saith unto them, I am he.** Before the effect produced by the reply is related, a parenthetical clause is introduced.—**And Judas also, which betrayed him, was standing with them.** What is the object of this clause? Not to explain what afterwards happened, as if Judas had been the first to fall, and so to produce a confusion which made his companions also fall; not merely to awaken indirectly a deeper feeling of abhorrence for the traitor who thus dared to present himself before his victim, and that, too, as we learn from the other Evangelists, with a kiss; least of all in order to connect this Gospel with the earlier ones, its author feeling that as he had not told the story of the kiss of Judas it would be well for him at

least to indicate the place where it had been given. The explanation is to be found in chap. xiii. 27. We have before us Judas possessed by Satan. The powers of evil are concentrated in him; and to bring him thus prominently forward as sharing the fate of others illustrates in the most striking manner the victory of Jesus even in this hour of apparent defeat. Not man only but Satan shall fall prostrate before the Divine Son; and, if the latter is taken by His enemies, it is not because of their power but because He freely surrenders Himself into their hands (chap. x. 18).

Ver. 6. **When therefore he said unto them, I am he, they went backward and fell to the ground.** It is the Divine majesty and innocence of Jesus that produced the effect. Like the buyers and sellers in the temple, the history of whose terror at the presence of the Redeemer is vouched for by the testimony of the earlier gospels as much as by that of the fourth, they are overwhelmed with awe, and fall before Him (comp. on chap. ii. 16). As soon as they recover, Jesus repeats His question.

Ver. 7. **Again therefore he asked them, Whom seek ye?** Their reply is in the same terms as before.—**And they said, Jesus of Nazareth.** The moment is come when Jesus is to deliver Himself up, and His sole concern now is for the safety of His disciples.

Ver. 8. **Jesus answered, I told you that I am he: if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way.** And then the Evangelist tells us of the illustration which he beheld in this of the meaning of certain words of Jesus uttered not long before.

Ver. 9. **That the word might be fulfilled, which he spake, Those which thou hast given me, I lost not one of them.** The words thus referred to are those of chap. xvii. 12. There they primarily apply to spiritual and eternal safety; here to what is, in the first instance at least, temporal deliverance. It is impossible to imagine that the Evangelist did not understand this: but the powers of the world and of evil are so identified in his eyes that oppression by, or deliverance from, the one is oppression by, or deliverance from, the other. The temporal is the shadow of the eternal, and the principles working out upon man's stage here stretch into the long hereafter. In addition to this, however, it is to be noticed that the temporal deliverance thus afforded was really a means to secure the spiritual safety of the disciples. Seized by the Roman guard, they would in all probability have denied their Master even more faithlessly than Peter was so soon to do.

Ver. 10. **Simon Peter therefore having a sword drew it, and smote the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. And the servant's name was Malchus.** It is possible that the position of 'therefore' in the original, between 'Simon' and 'Peter,' may be designed to call attention to the import of the apostle's name. It is not Simon only who does the act about to be mentioned, but Simon who is 'Peter,' the rock, the bold and determined one. The 'servant' is not one of the 'officers' formerly mentioned, but the high priest's own attendant, who may have borne his master's message to the 'officers.' His name was Malchus, and the mention of this fact, as well as of the minute circumstance that the ear cut off was the right ear, illustrates the personal knowledge possessed by John of what he describes. The earlier Evangelists, who all mention the in-

cident, do not give the servant's name (Matt. xxvi. 51; Mark xiv. 47; Luke xxii. 50). As the great object of John in this passage is to illustrate the perfect submission of Jesus to the will of His heavenly Father in the 'hour' now come, nothing is said of the healing of the ear. Luke alone tells us of it (chap. xxii. 51).

Ver. 11. *Jesus therefore said unto Peter, Put up the sword into the sheath: the cup which the Father hath given me, should I not drink it?* The aid of all violence is disclaimed. Jesus speaks not of 'thy' sword but of 'the'

sword, and thus shows that He can Himself resort to no measure of outward self-defence. It is His Father's will that He should suffer and die, and to that will He unhesitatingly resigns Himself. The particular form in which the submission is expressed reminds us of the prayer in Gethsemane (Matt. xxvi. 39), and the same form of expression occurs at Matt. xx. 22. It appears to have been frequent on the lips of the Son of man. Jesus is now of His own accord at the disposal of His enemies. His words have put a stop to all further steps for His defence.

## CHAPTER XVIII. 12-27.

*Jesus before Annas and Caiaphas.*

- 12 **T**HEN the band<sup>1</sup> and the <sup>a</sup>captain and <sup>a</sup>officers of the  
 13 Jews took Jesus, and bound him, And <sup>b</sup>led him away<sup>3</sup> to  
<sup>c</sup>Annas first; for he was father-in-law to <sup>c</sup>Caiaphas, <sup>d</sup>which  
 14 was the high priest that same year.<sup>4</sup> Now <sup>d</sup>Caiaphas was he  
 which gave counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient that one  
 15 man should die for the people. And <sup>e</sup>Simon Peter followed  
 Jesus, and *so did* another disciple: that disciple was known  
 unto the high priest, and <sup>f</sup>went in with Jesus into the <sup>f</sup>palace<sup>5</sup>  
 16 of the high priest. But <sup>g</sup>Peter stood at the door without.  
 Then went out that <sup>g</sup>other disciple,<sup>6</sup> which was known unto the  
 high priest,<sup>7</sup> and spake unto her that kept the door, and brought  
 17 in Peter. Then saith the damsel<sup>10</sup> that kept the door<sup>11</sup> unto  
 Peter, Art not<sup>12</sup> thou also *one* of this man's disciples? He  
 18 saith, I am not. And the servants and <sup>h</sup>officers stood<sup>13</sup> there,  
 who had made a <sup>i</sup>fire of coals;<sup>14</sup> for it was cold: and they  
 warmed<sup>15</sup> themselves: and <sup>h</sup>Peter stood with them, and warmed  
 19 himself.<sup>16</sup> The high priest then<sup>17</sup> asked Jesus of his disciples,  
 20 and of his doctrine.<sup>18</sup> Jesus answered him, <sup>i</sup>I spake openly<sup>19</sup>  
 to the world; I ever <sup>m</sup>taught in the<sup>20</sup> synagogue, and in the <sup>m</sup>  
<sup>i</sup>temple,<sup>21</sup> whither the Jews always resort;<sup>22</sup> and in secret have  
 21 I said<sup>23</sup> nothing. Why askest thou me? ask them which  
 heard<sup>24</sup> me, what I have said unto them; behold, they<sup>25</sup>  
 22 know what <sup>n</sup>I said. And when he had thus spoken,<sup>27</sup> one of

<sup>a</sup> Mark vi. 21;  
 Acts xxi. 31,  
 etc.  
<sup>b</sup> See Matt.  
 xxvi. 57.  
<sup>c</sup> Luke iii. 2.  
<sup>d</sup> Chap. xi. 49,  
 50, 51.

<sup>e</sup> Matt. xxvi.  
 58; Mark  
 xiv. 54;  
 Luke xxii.  
 54.  
<sup>f</sup> Matt. xxvi. 3.  
<sup>g</sup> Matt. xxvi.  
 69, 70; Mark  
 xiv. 54.  
 66 68; Luke  
 xxii. 54-57.

<sup>h</sup> Ver. 3.  
<sup>i</sup> Chap. xxi. 9  
<sup>k</sup> Ver. 25.

<sup>l</sup> Matt. xxvi.  
 55.  
<sup>m</sup> Chap. vi. 59.

- <sup>1</sup> The band of soldiers therefore      <sup>2</sup> add the      <sup>3</sup> omit away  
<sup>4</sup> which was high priest of that year      <sup>5</sup> add he      <sup>6</sup> court  
<sup>7</sup> omit Then went out that      <sup>8</sup> The other disciple therefore  
<sup>9</sup> add went forth      <sup>10</sup> The damsel therefore      <sup>11</sup> add saith  
<sup>12</sup> omit not      <sup>13</sup> were standing  
<sup>14</sup> having made a fire of charcoal      <sup>15</sup> were warming  
<sup>16</sup> and Peter also was with them, standing and warming himself  
<sup>17</sup> therefore      <sup>18</sup> teaching      <sup>19</sup> I have spoken boldly  
<sup>20</sup> omit the      <sup>21</sup> temple-courts      <sup>22</sup> where all the Jews assemble  
<sup>23</sup> I spake      <sup>24</sup> have heard      <sup>25</sup> these  
<sup>26</sup> the things that      <sup>27</sup> had said these things

- the officers which stood by \* struck Jesus \* with the palm of <sup>28</sup> his hand, saying, Answerest thou the high priest so? Jesus answered him, If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil: but if well, why smitest thou me? Now <sup>29</sup> Annas had sent <sup>30</sup> him bound unto Caiaphas the high priest. <sup>31</sup> And Simon Peter <sup>32</sup> stood and warmed himself. They said therefore unto him, Art not <sup>33</sup> thou also *one* of his disciples? He denied *it*, <sup>34</sup> and said, I am not. One of the servants of the high priest, being *his kinsman* <sup>35</sup> \* whose ear Peter cut off, saith, Did not I see thee in the garden with him? Peter then <sup>36</sup> denied again: and immediately \* the cock crew.

<sup>28</sup> omit the palm of<sup>31</sup> was standing and warming<sup>34</sup> being a kinsman of him<sup>29</sup> omit Now<sup>32</sup> omit not<sup>35</sup> therefore<sup>30</sup> Annas therefore sent<sup>33</sup> omit it

\* Comp. Acts  
xxiii. 2-4.  
o Matt. xxvi.  
67; chap.  
xix. 3.

\* Matt. xxvi.  
71-75; Mark  
xiv. 69 72;  
Luke xxii.  
58-62.  
q Ver. 18.

\* Ver. 20.

\* Chap. xiii. 36.

CONTENTS. We have in this passage the appearance of Jesus before Annas and Caiaphas, together with the three denials of the Apostle Peter. The difficulties of the passage, both in itself and in its relation to the earlier Gospels, are unquestionably great. Our first aim must be to understand the narrative as it is here presented to us, without regard to any other narratives that we possess.

Ver. 12. *The band of soldiers therefore, and the captain, and the officers of the Jews, took Jesus and bound him.* The words addressed by Jesus to Peter lend boldness to His cowardly foes. They see that no further resistance is to be offered. A passive victim is before them; and they seize and bind Him.

Ver. 13. *And led him to Annas first, for he was father-in-law to Caiaphas which was high priest of that year.* The word 'first' is worthy of notice. It may be used only with reference to the narrative that follows; but it is also possible that we have here another instance, similar to that which we have already met in chap. iii. 24, of the clear and decided manner in which the writer of the Fourth Gospel corrects impressions drawn from the incomplete statements of the earlier Gospels. In the latter we read only of a hearing before Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin, and no mention is made of Annas. That Jesus *was* taken before Annas 'first' is the statement of John, and the very distinctness with which it is made is no small evidence that we are dealing with real history.

Ver. 14. *Now Caiaphas was he who had given counsel to the Jews, that it was expedient that one man should die for the people.* The introduction of these words obviously indicates that the reason why Jesus was taken to Annas first is not to be found in the mere *fact* of his relationship to Caiaphas, but that it is to be sought also in that *character* of the latter which, it was hoped, would influence the former. By the reference made to chap. xi. 50 we are reminded that, in his hostility to Jesus, Caiaphas had lost self-control, and had become a mere instrument in the hands of higher powers who were urging him onward to fill up the measure of his guilt. Either, therefore, the Jews thought that the hostility to Jesus raging in his breast must have already influenced his whole

family circle (comp. chaps. vi. 71, xiii. 26), or they hoped that Annas, if not as yet so deeply implicated in the plot as his son-in-law, might now be persuaded to throw himself heartily into their plans. It was at the same time of the utmost importance to secure the co-operation of Annas, whose influence, as we learn from Josephus, was very great in Jerusalem. Before this powerful man then Jesus stands, bound, submissive, knowing the fate that is before Him. Resting upon this as its background, we have now what the Evangelist, as we shall yet more clearly see, is greatly concerned to describe, the faithlessness of Peter.

Ver. 15. *And Simon Peter followed Jesus, and so did another disciple.* Although not certain, it is upon the whole most probable that the 'other disciple' thus unnamed is John himself. He and Peter may have fled at first with the others; but, if so, they had immediately returned. The name given to Simon is again important. We have already seen at ver. 9 the manner in which the Evangelist brings out the force of 'Peter.' Of that force we must not here lose sight. Simon is still 'the rock,' notwithstanding what he is about to do. It is the very fact indeed that he is 'Peter' which shows how terrible is the moment, and how deep the stab inflicted upon Jesus. But so far is John from wishing to depreciate his fellow-apostle that he regards him, even in the midst of his greatest defection, as the lion of the apostolic band, the man to whom Jesus had given the name Peter in order to indicate his boldness, the man with whom he had himself stood side by side, in years at the time he wrote long gone by, fronting undismayed the very judges who made him tremble now. At the door opening into the high priest's 'court' Peter is stopped. It is indeed only for a few moments, but they are full of weight for the understanding of the narrative. During them Jesus passes through. The two apostles do not pass through at the same instant: John alone finds immediate admittance; and we are justified in saying that, before Peter has well begun his parley at the door, Jesus will be out of sight. Had it not been for an accidental circumstance the two apostles would not have been admitted at all. This circumstance is next related.—*And that disciple was known unto the high priest, and he went*



in with Jesus into the court of the high priest. Reserving until we come to the close of ver. 27 any inquiry into the question whether the 'high priest' here spoken of was Annas or Caiaphas, we remark only that it is unnecessary to ask by what means John was known to him. There is no improbability in the circumstance, especially when we remember that the relatives of the Apostle were persons in easy circumstances (Mark i. 20). Thus known, he finds no difficulty in obtaining entrance into the court.

Ver. 16. But Peter stood at the door without. Peter is stopped at the door; and, while he stands there, Jesus is lost to his view.—The other disciple therefore, which was known unto the high priest, went forth and spake unto her that kept the door, and brought in Peter. The circumstance thus related is in the highest degree natural, and it is related in the most simple manner.

Ver. 17. The damsel therefore that kept the door saith unto Peter, Art thou also one of this man's disciples? He saith, I am not. The maid knew that John was one of the disciples of Jesus, and the interest taken by him in Peter leads her to suppose that the latter must also be one of them. She asks the question, and the first denial takes place. As Peter enters the court, he says, 'I am not.' A little incident is now mentioned which, slight as it seems, must be carefully attended to.

Ver. 18. And the servants and the officers were standing there, having made a fire of charcoal; for it was cold, and they were warming themselves; and Peter also was with them, standing and warming himself. These 'servants' and 'officers,' it must be remembered, are those who had so recently laid hold of Jesus, and who were the instruments of His sufferings. They had made a fire of charcoal, a circumstance in itself exceedingly natural in the cold of that spring night; and at it they stood and warmed themselves. 'Peter' also 'with them' was standing and warming himself. Such seems at first to be the sole meaning of the words: but the clause 'for it was cold,' reminding us of chap. x. 22 and chap. xiii. 30, forces upon us the impression that the Evangelist has something more in view than the simple fact apparent to the first glance at the words employed by him. The fact is historical. We know that even from the other Gospels. But it is more than historical. To the symbolic eye of John it has a deeper meaning. In this night of cold he sees Peter associating himself with the enemies of Jesus, perhaps consulting his own comfort while his Master suffers, at all events putting himself in a position where the faithlessness that had already led to his first denial must gain strength; and he thus prepares us to expect that the sin of which he has been already guilty may, probably will, be followed by a still greater fall. Whether this idea is brought out also by the 'fire of charcoal' is more difficult to say. It seems not unlikely that it is, for the word is not used by the other Evangelists; 'coals of charcoal' are in the Old Testament one of the symbols of Divine judgment (Ps. xviii. 13, cxx. 4, cxi. 10); and this symbolic meaning may be extended to chap. xxi. 9, the only other passage of the New Testament where we find the word. Apart from this, however, there is enough to show that ver. 18 is not simply historical. The peculiar spirit of the

Evangelist appears in it, and we have thus the less occasion for surprise if we meet in the narrative other traces of the same spirit.

Ver. 19. The high priest therefore asked Jesus of his disciples and of his teaching. Again reserving for the moment any inquiry as to who the 'high priest' here spoken of was, and also as to the special character of the investigation itself, we remark only that the object of the narrative is to direct our attention mainly to Jesus. The Evangelist would place Him before us in the dignity and calmness with which He bore His sufferings, as well as in the consciousness of that perfect innocence through which He was able to confront, and really to defeat, His enemies in what seemed the very height of their power. To this, accordingly, he immediately proceeds.

Vers. 20, 21. Jesus answered him, I have spoken boldly to the world: I ever taught in synagogue and in the temple-courts, where all the Jews assemble, and in secret I spake nothing. Why askest thou me? Ask them which have heard me what I have said unto them: behold, these know the things that I said. The answer is dignified, self-possessed, and calm. Jesus simply makes His appeal to the frank openness of His whole past teaching. He is willing to cast Himself even on the testimony of His enemies. They know what He has spoken, and He has no need to fear if they tell the truth. At the same time the words are intended to rebuke the hypocrisy of those who pretended a wish to know more about His teaching, when in truth they sought only a pretext for accusation. The mention of 'the world' and of 'all' the Jews lends great force to what is said.

Ver. 22. And when he had said these things, one of the officers which stood by struck Jesus with his hand, saying, Answerest thou the high priest so? When we remember that the 'court' in which the examination was going on could not be large, it seems probable that this 'officer' said to have been 'standing by' was one of those referred to in ver. 18 as the officers who 'stood' by the fire. If so, the circumstance is important, as showing that Peter must have been in the immediate vicinity of Jesus at the moment when the blow was given. Under no circumstances indeed can he have been far off; and the fact is to be kept in view, for it constitutes one of the points of distinction between his first and his subsequent denials. The blow was a rude, perhaps a cruel one. It was also wholly unprovoked, for in the answer of Jesus there had been no want of courtesy. Yet it failed to disturb in the least degree the equanimity of the Sufferer, or to provoke Him out of His spirit of submission to His Heavenly Father's will.

Ver. 23. Jesus answered him, If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why smitest thou me? 'Bear witness' here is certainly not equivalent to 'prove by bearing testimony in a regular manner,' an injunction which would have been out of place. It is simply the solemn word demanded by the circumstances of the moment. Jesus is where He is by Divine appointment; and everything relating to His present state bears impress of the solemnity of His position.—It is precisely in John's manner that no answer to these words is recorded. The picture of submission is complete. Mere historical detail, such as might satisfy curiosity, is of subordinate



interest to the Evangelist. The fact, however, that this is the case is worthy of notice. It helps to throw light upon that structure of the narrative as a whole which we have not yet examined.

Ver. 24. **Annas therefore sent him bound to Caiaphas the high priest.** The difficulty connected with these words will be best explained when we have completed the consideration of the three following verses. In the meanwhile it is enough to observe that in the original Annas is so introduced to our notice as to lead us directly back to the 'Annas' of ver. 13.

Ver. 25. **And Simon Peter was standing and warming himself.** The remarkable taking up again in these words of the fact already mentioned in ver. 18 cannot fail to arrest attention. As far as mere history is concerned, the words are unnecessary. Nor does there seem to be any explanation of their presence here but that they are designed to elucidate the idea of the scene about to be described. Peter is no longer only near the door; he is within the court. He is no longer only in the cold; he is warming himself at the charcoal fire. He is no longer only with John; he is along with the servants and officers of the Jews. Everything corresponds to that more determined, that double, denial of our Lord now to be described.—**They said therefore unto him, Art thou also one of his disciples? He denied and said, I am not.** We are not told who asked the question. The general pronoun 'they' is used. In the narratives of the earlier Evangelists we find that, according to Matt. xxvi. 71, this denial was drawn forth by 'another maid;' according to Mark xiv. 69 by 'the maid,' probably the maid of the porch; according to Luke xxii. 58 by 'another man.' In John we have what seems the solution of these apparent discrepancies. It was not one person only that thus spoke to Peter. The remark was made by many,—in the excitement of the moment by many at the same time; and Peter (as is even implied in Mark xiv. 70) repeated his answer to one after another. The 'they' thus suggests what was the true course of events. The second denial, as in Matt. xxvi. 72, was in boldness and recklessness an advance upon the first. At ver. 17 only the word 'saith' is used; now 'denied and said.'

Ver. 26. **One of the servants of the high priest, being a kinsman of him whose ear Peter cut off, saith, Did not I see thee in the garden with him?** It is natural to ask why mention is made of the relationship between the servant who asks this question and the other servant who had suffered through Peter's hasty zeal. The probable answer is, that the circumstance is not merely historical, but that it aids in developing the idea which the Evangelist has in view. It heightens the effect. This man would ask his question with far more bitterness than the others (comp. the expression of Luke when he says in chap. xxii. 59, 'he confidently affirmed'). He had been personally aggrieved by the injury inflicted on his kinsman. His question too is much more pointed,—not whether Peter is one of the disciples, but whether his own eyes had not seen him but a little before upon a spot which he could name.

Ver. 27. **Again therefore Peter denied.** Nothing is said of the adjurations mentioned by the first two Evangelists—**And immediately the cock crew.** All else recorded in the earlier Gospels is omitted.

We are now in a position to look back upon the whole narrative from ver. 12 to the present point, with the view of endeavouring to meet the difficulties presented when we compare it with the narratives of the first three Evangelists. As to those connected with the three denials of Peter, it seems unnecessary to add much to what has been already said on ver. 25. We may only notice that a use of the pronoun 'they' exactly similar to its use in that verse meets us in Matt. xxvi. 73 and Mark xiv. 70 when compared with Luke xxii. 59 and John xviii. 26. In these passages the third denial is in question, and in the first two Evangelists it is drawn forth by 'them that stood by,' in the last two by a single person. The solution depends upon the same principle as that of which we have spoken with regard to the second denial in John. Not one only but many of the eager and excited spectators would ask the question, and of that number Luke and John might easily single out the person peculiarly prominent. All three denials took place in the court of the high priest's house, and within the range of both the light and the heat of the fire that had been kindled there,—the first, immediately after Peter had been brought into the court; the second, when he had retired into the opening of the porch but was still within hearing of remarks made around the fire (Matt. xxvi. 71);<sup>1</sup> the third, when he was again more fully within the court.

From the denials of Peter we pass to the nature of the trial of Jesus here recorded and to the judge before whom it took place. Is the trial described by John the same as that of which an account is given us by Matthew (chap. xxvi. 57-68)? or is it a preliminary examination, having the nature of a precognition, and instituted for the purpose of laying a foundation for the more formal trial before the Sanhedrin? The impression produced by the narrative is that it was the latter; that it is a record of the proceedings taken before Annas 'first,' and that at it therefore Annas presided. Yet two difficulties stand in the way of this interpretation,—the first, that Caiaphas, not Annas, appears to be the high priest so repeatedly mentioned in John xviii. 15-22; the second, that in Matthew's Gospel the first denial of Peter is related *after* the *public* trial is finished, while here, on the supposition of which we speak, it will be distinctly stated to have taken place *before* that trial began. As to the first of these, it is at least possible that Annas may be 'the high priest' of vers. 15-22. Though he had been deposed by the Roman authorities, the office was, according to the provision of the Old Testament, for life; and a Jew like John might well speak of him as still the rightful possessor of the title (comp. Luke iii. 2). But if this solution is not very probable, there is another which fairly meets the case. Annas and Caiaphas may have occupied apartments in the same house surrounding the 'court' of our narra-

<sup>1</sup> The first impression produced by this verse is that the word 'there' in it relates to the interior of the porch. But it is absolutely impossible to think that many would be standing in such a place. They may have been around it, even within it, where it opened into the 'court'; in its deeper recesses they certainly would not be. In this point of view great interest and importance attach to an alternative reading of Matt. xxvi. 71, which is very probably the true reading,—not 'and saith unto them that were there,' 'This fellow was with Jesus of Nazareth,' but 'and saith unto them, There this fellow also was with Jesus of Nazareth.'

tive. The structure of higher-class houses in Palestine, the relationship of the persons themselves, and the customs of the East lead not unnaturally to such a view; and it was very early entertained. But if so, though Jesus was really taken to Annas, Caiaphas would in all probability be present at the examination; and, thus present, his more youthful years and the passionateness of his rage against Jesus would lead him to act the prominent part which is assigned to him. The second difficulty is still more easily met. We have to bear in mind the peculiar structure of the first Gospel, and the tendency of its author (of which we had a marked illustration in considering the supper at Bethany in chap. xiii.) to group his particulars according to their substance, rather than in strict chronological arrangement. Such may well be his object in chap. xxvi. 69-75, where the three denials are obviously brought into the closest proximity to each other. We seem even to be furnished with a hint to this effect by the words of ver. 69, 'Now Peter sat without in the porch.' It is not at all likely that, at the *close* of the trial, amidst the confusion and bustle of the moment, and when the enemies of Jesus were hurrying Him away, after having so far accomplished their object, a person of Peter's impetuous disposition would continue *sitting* in the porch. There is indeed another difficulty, connected with ver. 24 of our passage; where, after Caiaphas has taken the part of which we have spoken, Annas is said to have 'sent' Jesus to him. This difficulty cannot be overcome by the rendering of the Authorised Version, 'had sent;' and the particle connecting the verse with those preceding it is undoubtedly not 'now' but 'therefore.' Yet we may well suppose that the

reference is to the public trial which was yet to take place before Caiaphas as high priest by law: in this capacity, and not in the more private one in which he had been acting at the investigation before Annas, he is now to have Jesus sent to him. If to these considerations we add the fact that we are ignorant of many of those details which would throw light upon the customs of the time, we shall, while not denying that some difficulty still remains, be able to rest with perfect confidence in the general faithfulness of the narrative.

One word more may be permitted in regard to the mode in which the three denials of Peter are presented to us by John. It will be observed that they are given in two groups, and that between the two there is advance; the effect is heightened as we proceed. Thus, in the first group there is only one denial: in the second there are two. The first takes place at a moment when Jesus has passed out of Peter's sight: the second and third at a moment when Jesus is under Peter's eye,—bound, yet patient and submissive. The first is made when Peter is as yet with John: the second and third when he has associated himself with the enemies of Jesus. At the moment of the first Peter is in the 'cold;' at that of the second and third he has seated himself at the fire of charcoal. The first is expressed by 'Peter saith:' the second and third are much more emphatic, 'he denied and said,' 'he denied again.' So many particulars warrant the inference that here, as in various other passages of his Gospel, John sees the historical facts with which he deals presenting themselves in two pictures, both unfolding the same truth, but in a climactic form.

## CHAPTER XVIII 28-XIX. 16a.

## FIRST PART, XVIII 28-40.

*Jesus before Pilate.*

- 28 **T**HEN <sup>a</sup>led they <sup>1</sup>Jesus from Caiaphas <sup>2</sup>unto <sup>b</sup>the hall of judgment: <sup>3</sup>and it was early; <sup>4</sup>and they themselves <sup>c</sup>went not into the judgment hall, <sup>5</sup>lest they should <sup>b</sup>be defiled; <sup>d</sup>Matt. xxvii. 2; Mark xv. 1; Luke xxiii. 1.
- 29 but that they <sup>e</sup>might eat the passover. Pilate then <sup>7</sup>went out <sup>f</sup>Matt. xxvii. 27.
- 30 unto them, and said, <sup>8</sup>What accusation bring ye against this <sup>g</sup>Acts x. 28.
- 31 man? They answered and said unto him, If he were not a malefactor, <sup>9</sup>we would <sup>10</sup>not have delivered him up unto thee.
- 32 Then said Pilate <sup>11</sup>unto them, Take ye him, <sup>12</sup>and judge him according to your law. The Jews therefore <sup>13</sup>said unto him,
- 33 It is not lawful for us to put any man to death: <sup>d</sup>Chap. xiii. 18.
- saying <sup>14</sup>of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spake, <sup>e</sup>Chap. cii. 32.
- 33 what <sup>15</sup>death he should die. <sup>16</sup>Then Pilate entered into the

<sup>1</sup> They lead therefore<sup>4</sup> add morning<sup>7</sup> therefore <sup>8</sup> saith<sup>11</sup> Pilate therefore said<sup>14</sup> word<sup>2</sup> from the house of Caiaphas<sup>5</sup> that they might not<sup>9</sup> If this man were not an evil-doer<sup>12</sup> Take him yourselves<sup>15</sup> by what manner of<sup>3</sup> into the palace<sup>6</sup> omit that they<sup>10</sup> should<sup>13</sup> omit therefore<sup>16</sup> he was about to die

- judgment hall again,<sup>17</sup> and called Jesus, and said unto him,  
 34 <sup>f</sup> Art thou the King of the Jews? Jesus answered him,<sup>18</sup> <sup>f</sup> Matt. xviii. 11; Mark xv. 2; Luke xxiii. 3.  
 Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it<sup>19</sup> thee  
 35 of<sup>20</sup> me? Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation  
 and the <sup>e</sup> chief priests have<sup>21</sup> delivered thee unto me: what <sup>f</sup> Matt. xxvii. 1, 2.  
 36 hast thou done? Jesus answered, <sup>a</sup> My kingdom is not of this <sup>f</sup> Dan. ii. 44.  
 world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my <sup>vii. 14; chap. vi. 15.</sup>  
 servants fight,<sup>22</sup> that I should not be delivered to the Jews:  
 37 but now is my kingdom not from hence. Pilate therefore said  
 unto him, Art thou a king then?<sup>23</sup> Jesus answered, Thou  
 sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born,<sup>24</sup> and for this  
 cause came I<sup>25</sup> into the world, that I should bear witness unto  
 the truth. <sup>i</sup> Every one that is <sup>a</sup> of the truth heareth my voice. <sup>i</sup> See chap.  
 38 Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And when he had said <sup>i</sup> John ii. 21.  
 this, he went out<sup>26</sup> again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, <sup>iii. 19.</sup>  
 39 <sup>i</sup> I find in him no fault<sup>27</sup> at all.<sup>28</sup> <sup>m</sup> But ye have a custom, that <sup>f</sup> Matt. xxvii. 24; Luke xxiii. 4; chap. xix. 4, 6.  
 I should release unto you one at the passover: will ye there- <sup>m</sup> Matt. xxvii. 15-17; Mark xv. 6-11; Luke xxiii. 18, 19.  
 40 fore that I release unto you the King of the Jews? Then <sup>n</sup> Arts iii. 14.  
 cried they all again,<sup>29</sup> saying, "Not this man, but Barabbas.  
 Now Barabbas was a robber.

- <sup>17</sup> Pilate therefore entered again into the palace      <sup>18</sup> omit him      <sup>19</sup> omit it  
<sup>20</sup> concerning      <sup>21</sup> omit have      <sup>22</sup> strive  
<sup>23</sup> A king art thou then?      <sup>24</sup> have I been born  
<sup>25</sup> and to this end have I come      <sup>26</sup> forth      <sup>27</sup> crime  
<sup>28</sup> omit at all      <sup>29</sup> They cried out therefore again

CONTENTS. From the examination before Caiaphas we are taken to the trial before Pilate. The scene is in every respect one of the most remarkable in the Gospel, alike in its selection of incidents and vividness of description, and in that tragic under-current of thought by which it reveals the humiliation, the condemnation, and the shame of the guilty Jews, while they clamour for judgment upon One whom a heathen would have set free. Again and again, in rejecting their true King, they confess the degradation to which they have reduced themselves, until at last that degradation culminates in words implying the forfeiture of all that had distinguished Judaism, all that of which it had been most proud. The passage contains one of those double pictures which mark the style of John, and the incidents of the two pictures are so arranged that the second exhibits an advance upon the first.

Ver. 28. They lead therefore Jesus from the house of Caiaphas into the palace, and it was early morning. The 'palace' here spoken of was in all probability a part of the castle of Antonia at the north-west corner of the temple-mount. Pilate had come for the time from Cæsarea to reside here, in order more effectually to repress the disturbances apt to arise at the season of the Passover. The hour, immediately after 'cock-crowing,' was certainly not later than 3 or 3.30 A.M. It need excite no surprise that the Jews should lead Jesus to Pilate at such an hour. During the whole night of the Passover the city

would be in commotion; on this night in particular they were prepared for disturbance (comp. on chap. xviii. 3); and the governor would certainly be ready to receive any delinquent. It is worthy of notice, however, that Pilate does not take his formal seat on the tribunal until 6 A.M. (chap. xix. 14), the hour before which, according to Roman law, no judge was entitled to pronounce judgment.

And they themselves went not into the palace, that they might not be defiled, but might eat the passover. In a commentary such as the present, where space is necessarily limited, the difficulty occasioned by these words must be very briefly stated. Looked at in their present context, the words 'that they might eat the Passover' can refer to nothing but the Paschal meal properly so called, and not to any of the other meals of the Paschal season. Thus, however, the expression seems to indicate that the Paschal Supper had not been celebrated on the evening previous to the events now passing, but that it was to be celebrated on the evening of the day now begun. On the other hand, the earlier Evangelists distinctly state that it was from the Paschal Supper that Jesus and His disciples rose when they went into the garden, and when the betrayal took place. These Evangelists and John thus appear to be in direct contradiction to one another. We have to do with the question now only in so far as it concerns the verse before us. That verse cannot mean that the Jews referred to in it were looking

forward to the celebration of the Passover on the evening of the day about to begin, or just begun. The hour was probably 3 or 3.30 A.M. The Passover was a night-festival. It certainly would not begin till the evening was well advanced; that is, not less than eighteen hours had to pass from the point at which we are now standing till we reach it. These hours include a sunset, the time at which uncleanness of a much more serious kind than that produced by entering into the house of a Gentile was removed by the simple process of washing with water. The Jews could have no fear that by entering into Pilate's hall they would unfit themselves for eating a Paschal meal to be celebrated the following evening. But if it be so, what is the meaning of the words? The answer is,—they were afraid that they might lose their Passover. The meal was not yet ended in the city. Jerusalem was crowded at the time: a very large number of lambs had to be killed and roasted after 3 P.M.; and it must have been impossible to close the feast in every Jewish family by midnight. The celebration must have gone on the whole night through. Now the persons here referred to had been interrupted in their feast. They may have sat down to the supper; but, before they had finished, Judas had been with them, his offer made, his plans accepted. They had hastily seized the opportunity, and had rushed out to the garden, resolving to return and finish their meal before daybreak. They had failed in this: yet they will 'ake one step more. They will try to obtain from the Roman governor the pronouncing of a final sentence upon their victim. If, however, this is to be done, it must be done quickly. We shall see immediately the marks of haste upon the narrative. From their haste came most naturally their scrupulousness at the thought of entering Pilate's house. To think that they would have been thus scrupulous had there been from eighteen to twenty-four hours to pass before they should be called to eat the Passover, is at variance with every feeling of human nature, as well as with the prescriptions of the ceremonial law. They were scrupulous because they desired to eat *without an hour's delay*. They had lost time already; the night was flying fast; the morning light would soon appear; it would be too late then: no interruption that can be escaped must be allowed: they would not go into the palace 'that they might not be defiled, but might eat the Passover.' It is here that we see the marks of rapid action spoken of above: the effect of the true reading and the true rendering being to bring the two verbs 'be defiled' and 'eat' into close connection with each other. The Jews were afraid of defilement at that moment, because at that moment they were desirous to complete their feast. It may perhaps be said in reply that, if this was their intention, it failed. Morning broke before they left Pilate, and they lost the opportunity of eating. Precisely so. It is probably one of the very thoughts that John wishes us to carry away from his story as he tells it. Instead of welcoming the true Paschal Lamb, these Jews rejected Him. What thought more in the manner of our Evangelist than to let us see that, seeking to retain the shadow, and sacrificing the substance for its sake, they lost not only the substance but the shadow too (comp. chap. xi. 48)?

Ver. 29. **Pilate therefore went out unto them, and saith, What accusation bring ye against this man?** Pilate was Procurator of Judea under

the Roman government; and his character, as described by writers of the time, is that of a sceptical, cold, and cruel man, arbitrary in his acts, and cherishing no feelings but those of contempt for the religion of Israel. He was, however, a Roman judge, and until his passions were excited there is no cause to think that he would not show the usual Roman respect for law. His first question, accordingly, was that of one who would try the prisoner before him with all fairness.

Ver. 30. **They answered and said unto him, If this man were not an evil-doer, we should not have delivered him up unto thee.** There is pride in the reply, a lofty sense of their own importance and dignity,—that importance and dignity which they are so soon to sacrifice. The person whom we bring before thee is a malefactor: is it not enough that *we* say so, and that *we* deliver him up to thee?

Ver. 31. **Pilate therefore said unto them, Take him yourselves, and judge him according to your law.** Pilate has already seen enough to satisfy him that no offence against civil order, calling for his interposition, has been committed. He will have nothing to do with merely religious squabbles, and he remits the whole matter to the Jews themselves. Thus the Jews are compelled to declare their purpose, and their *self-confessed* humiliation begins.—**The Jews said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death.** Shortly before this time the Jews had lost the power of putting criminals to death. But the point now is, that they have to *confess* it. In their answer the Evangelist seems to see a mockery of their high pretensions. The bitter irony of circumstances forces from them an acknowledgment of their shame. But, while they are thus degraded, the Divine purpose proceeds calmly to its accomplishment.

Ver. 32. **That the word of Jesus might be fulfilled, which he spake, signifying by what manner of death he was about to die.** The 'word' referred to is chap. iii. 14, or still more probably chap. xii. 32. The appeal to Pilate paved the way for the 'lifting on high' there spoken of. The Jewish mode of putting to death was stoning. Crucifixion was a Roman punishment, and could be inflicted by the Roman power alone. Hence, accordingly, the fulfilment of that 'word' of Jesus by the very persons who seemed to have Him completely in their hands. So far from its being so, they were in His.

Ver. 33. **Pilate therefore entered again into the palace, and called Jesus, and said unto him, Art thou the King of the Jews?** The emphasis of the question is remarkable. The word 'thou' stands in the original at the head of the sentence, as if Pilate would say: 'Thou,—thou so humbled, despised, handed over to me as a malefactor,—art *thou* the King of the Jews?' Pilate may not embrace the idea, but he at least thinks the question worthy of being asked. We may notice already that grouping of his materials by which the Evangelist would impress on us the folly as well as the sin of the Jews. Boasting of their superiority to the heathen governor, looking upon him as a 'sinner' and reprobate, they yet at this moment fall behind him in spiritual vision. They treat the claim of royal dignity on the part of Jesus as blasphemy. Pilate asks, 'Can it be true?' The charge leading to the question, omitted by John

as not necessary to his purpose, is given in Luke xxiii. 2.

Ver. 34. *Jesus answered, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell thee concerning me?* Many reasons have been suggested to account for this question of Jesus. The real reason seems to be, that the guilt of those now compassing His death may be fixed upon the proper parties. It is to appear that not Pilate before whose bar He stands, but others altogether are the guilty ones. The object is attained, for Pilate's answer shows that he knew of no harm in Jesus.

Ver. 35. *Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests delivered thee unto me. What hast thou done?* Nothing could more strongly express the contempt of the Roman governor for the Jews than these first words in reply, 'Am I a Jew?' No words of Jesus had called for a repudiation of Jewish birth, but He had spoken in such a way as might imply that Pilate had been taking counsel with the Jews about His case. Take counsel with them! The very suggestion of such a thing fills the governor's mind with disgust, and he cries out, 'Am I a Jew? What have I to do with so contemptible a race? Thine own people have delivered thee to me. But for them and for their wretched squabbles I care not. I make my appeal to thyself. Tell me thyself, what hast thou done?' All tends to bring out the frightful degradation to which 'the Jews,' the very flower of Judaism, have reduced themselves. A Gentile treats them with open scorn, and prefers the words of one brought before him as a malefactor to theirs.

Ver. 36. *Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants strive, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence.* Pilate had hardly comprehended the charge that Jesus made Himself a King. That Jesus really was so is the great point now to be established,—the point to the confession of which Pilate shall ultimately be brought. Jesus, accordingly, without replying directly to the question, 'What hast thou done?' turns to this. It is not His chief aim to explain the distinction between a spiritual and a political kingdom, a distinction which the Roman governor would hardly have been able to appreciate. It is to satisfy Pilate that He may be and is a King, although in a sense different from that in which Pilate understood the word. For the same purpose He adds, 'Then would my servants strive that I should not be delivered to the Jews:—where the word 'servants' (the same as 'officers' in ver. 18) does not point to spiritual disciples of the Lord, but to such as would be His attendants and soldiers if He were a monarch of this world. The mark of an earthly kingdom thus selected is precisely to the purpose of our Lord's argument as we have understood it. Pilate thought that He could not be a King, else His servants would strive to prevent His present humiliation and fate. That is no argument against My royal claims in their true sense, is the reply, for My kingdom is not one that has its origin in this world. In short, the whole argument is not one of self-defence alone; it is intended to lead Pilate to the acknowledgment that the prisoner before him is a King. Thus also the 'now' must be understood as the 'now' of the Divine counsels, not of merely present time. The period can never come when other words than

those before us may be used of the kingdom of Christ. It is never 'of this world,' never 'from hence.'

Ver. 37. *Pilate therefore said unto him, A king art thou then?* It is of importance to notice the difference of construction between the question as put here and at ver. 33. There 'Thou' stands in the first place, here the 'King.' The difference corresponds exactly to the course of thought which we have endeavoured to trace. In the first passage 'thou' is emphatic; 'thou so poor, so humbled, *thou* a King?' In the second 'King' is emphatic; 'a King then, high as that is, art thou?' In the first the thing is regarded as impossible; in the second the possibility has dawned upon the mind.—*Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a King.* It is hardly possible to understand these words as a directly affirmative reply to the question of Pilate, for Pilate had not acknowledged that Jesus was a King. It seems better to understand them in the sense, 'Thou usest the word king in regard to Me, but not in the right sense'; and then the following words point out what it was that really conferred on Jesus the empire that He claimed.—*To this end have I been born, and to this end have I come into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth: every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.* The transition here from the thought of kingship to that of 'witnessing' is very remarkable. It is to be explained by the consideration that, as 'the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister,' and as the true glory of His work lay in submission to the demands of self-denying love, so His kingdom consists in witnessing to that eternal truth which is the foundation of all existence, which all were created to own, and in which alone is life. The word 'witness' must be taken in a very emphatic sense. Jesus is not only the perfect, He is also the free and willing, Exponent or Revealer of all this truth to men. It is in His entire and voluntary surrender to it that His kingdom lies: His service is really His authority and power. In this respect, too, His dominion is universal over all who will own the truth: bowing to it, they must bow to Him in whom it is contained and by whom it is 'declared.' Thus in His *witnessing* He is King. We cannot fail to notice how the absoluteness of this witnessing is brought out by means of the formula used by Jewish writers, 'I have been born and am come,' as well as by the twice repeated 'to this end.' For this Jesus had become incarnate: for this He was still standing there. Was not such a witness to 'the truth' in all its glorious range of meaning in reality the universal King?

Ver. 38. *Pilate saith unto him, What is truth?* Not surely the question of one seriously searching after truth, for in that case he would have waited for a reply; nor that of one in despair, which would presuppose a moral depth in Pilate's character inconsistent with the light in which he comes before us both here and elsewhere; nor of mere frivolity, as if he were treating the whole subject lightly, for in that case he would probably have made fewer efforts to release Jesus; but simply the question of one who, having no correct ideas as to truth, and no conviction even that there was such a thing, found in this frame of mind a hindrance to the faith to which he might otherwise have risen. 'Were there such a thing as truth,' he says, 'then I might believe Thee, but truth is nothing, and

therefore Thy kingly position, if in this respect only Thou art a King, need not command my homage.'—And when he had said this, he went forth again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no crime. It is a distinct sentence of acquittal; and the point of the whole, as it presented itself to the eye of the Evangelist, seems to be in this, that a Roman governor, a Gentile, declares the innocence and even feels to some extent the true majesty of Him who, though King of the Jews, is rejected and doomed to death by that blinded and guilty people. This guilt of theirs, however, has to be brought out more fully. Another opportunity of retracing their steps has to be offered them, and to be cast away.

Ver. 39. But ye have a custom, that I should release unto you one at the passover; will ye therefore that I release unto you the King of the Jews? The origin of the custom thus alluded to is unknown, although it is generally supposed with no small measure of probability that, as connected with the Passover, it had been introduced as a symbolical expression of the deliverance of Israel out of Egypt. Pilate's object in making the proposal and in styling Jesus the King of the Jews is neither 'unwise mocking bitterness,' nor 'abortive cunning.' He had been impressed by the majesty of Jesus, and was satisfied of His innocence. But he had no depth of feeling in the matter, and his sense of justice was hardly awakened by it. Any irony in his words therefore has reference to the Jews and not to Jesus. Surely the poverty, the humiliation, the sufferings of the latter make Him a fit King for the former. As he really cares not what becomes of Him, but sees no reason to detain Him, he will make an effort to let Him go.

One subordinate circumstance connected with the words now before us must be noticed. They supply an argument for the fact that the Passover had begun, and that John cannot be understood in other passages to mean that it was still to be celebrated, on the evening of the day following the night in which we at present find ourselves. Even were it true, as urged by some, that the phrase 'at the Passover' might have been used of the 14th as well as the 15th Nisan, it is to be observed that, on the supposition of variance

between John and his predecessors, the 14th, according to the ordinary method of reckoning, was not yet come, because daylight of the 14th had not yet broken. But if so, we must either accept the supposition that 'at' or rather 'in' the Passover could be applied to the night between the 13th and the 14th (for Pilate is speaking of the present moment), or we must reject the idea that this last is the night in which we are now standing. The former supposition, besides being in a high degree improbable, is destitute of all proof; and the only theory consistent with the facts is that which proceeds upon the perfect harmony of all the Evangelists, placing us, at the instant before us, in the night between the 14th and the 15th. It may be worth while to add that those who understand the words of chap. xix. 14, 'the preparation of the Passover,' as meaning the day previous to it, have no right to say that when the words 'at the Passover' occur here, we are substantially at the same point of time. Surely 3 A.M. cannot be said to be 'at the Passover,' and 6 A.M. to be 'the preparation of the Passover.'

Ver. 40. They cried out therefore again, saying, Not this man, but Barabbas. The word 'again' is here peculiarly worthy of notice. No previous cry of the Jews had been mentioned by the Evangelist; and, had his story been constructed merely to illustrate an idea, he certainly would not have spoken of a second cry when he had said nothing of a first. The word can only be a historical reminiscence in the writer's own mind. He knew that the Jews had cried out before, although he had not thought it necessary to mention it. Now, therefore, when a cry was to be spoken of, which he remembers was a second one, an indication that it was so comes naturally from his pen, 'They cried out therefore again.' The cry was, 'Not this man but Barabbas;' and the guilty nature of the cry is immediately intensified by a brief but emphatic statement, designed far more to bring out this guilt than to make us acquainted with a fact of history.—Now Barabbas was a robber. A robber! and yet they preferred him to the holy Jesus, to the Only-Begotten of the Father, to their King!

## CHAPTER XVIII. 28-XIX. 16a.

## SECOND PART, XIX. 1-16a.

*Jesus before Pilate.*

- 1 THEN "Pilate therefore took Jesus, and <sup>b</sup> scourged him. <sup>a</sup> Matt. xxvii. 26-30; Mark xv 15-19.  
 2 And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns, and put it <sup>b</sup> Matt. xx. 19; Luke xxiii. 16, 22.  
 3 on his head, and they put on him a purple robe, And said, <sup>c</sup> Chap. xviii. 22.  
 Hail, King of the Jews! and 'they smote him' with their  
 4 hands. Pilate therefore went forth again,<sup>a</sup> and saith unto them, Behold, I bring him forth<sup>d</sup> to you, that ye may know<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup> And they came unto him and said  
<sup>b</sup> And Pilate went out again <sup>d</sup> out

<sup>a</sup> and they gave him blows  
<sup>b</sup> perceive

- 5 <sup>d</sup> that I find no fault <sup>e</sup> in him. Then came Jesus forth,<sup>f</sup> wearing <sup>d</sup>Ver 6;  
the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And Pilate<sup>g</sup> saith <sup>chap. xviii</sup>  
6 unto them, Behold<sup>h</sup> the man! When the chief priests there-  
fore and <sup>i</sup> officers saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify  
*him*, crucify *him*.<sup>i</sup> Pilate saith unto them, Take ye him,<sup>j</sup> and  
7 crucify *him*: for I find no fault <sup>k</sup> in him. The Jews answered  
him, <sup>l</sup> We have a law, and by our <sup>l</sup> law he ought to die, because <sup>Lev. xxiv.</sup>  
8 <sup>m</sup> he made himself the <sup>l</sup> Son of God. When Pilate therefore <sup>Matt. xxvi.</sup>  
9 heard that saying,<sup>n</sup> he was the more afraid; And <sup>63, 64;</sup> went  
again into the judgment hall,<sup>o</sup> and saith unto Jesus, <sup>chap. v. 18,</sup> Whence <sup>v. 36.</sup>  
10 art thou? But <sup>p</sup> Jesus gave him no answer. Then saith <sup>Chap. ix. 29.</sup>  
Pilate<sup>q</sup> unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou  
not that I have power to crucify <sup>r</sup> thee, and <sup>s</sup> have power to  
11 release <sup>t</sup> thee? Jesus answered, Thou couldest <sup>u</sup> have no  
power *at all*<sup>v</sup> against me, except it were <sup>w</sup> given thee from  
above: therefore <sup>x</sup> he that delivered me <sup>y</sup> unto thee hath the <sup>z</sup>  
12 greater sin. And <sup>aa</sup> from thenceforth <sup>ab</sup> Pilate sought to release <sup>Acts iii. 13.</sup>  
him: but the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go,<sup>ac</sup>  
thou art not Cæsar's friend: <sup>ad</sup> whosoever <sup>ae</sup> maketh himself a <sup>Luke xxiii.</sup>  
13 king speaketh against Cæsar. When Pilate therefore heard  
that saying,<sup>af</sup> he brought Jesus forth,<sup>ag</sup> and <sup>ah</sup> sat down in <sup>ai</sup> the  
judgment seat in <sup>aj</sup> a place that is <sup>ak</sup> called the Pavement, but  
14 in the <sup>al</sup> Hebrew, Gabbatha. And it was the <sup>am</sup> preparation <sup>Vers. 31, 42;</sup>  
of the passover, and <sup>an</sup> about the sixth hour: and he saith unto <sup>Matt. xxvii.</sup>  
15 the Jews, Behold<sup>ao</sup> your King! But they <sup>62; Mark</sup> cried out, <sup>xv. 42; Luke</sup> Away  
with *him*, away with *him*, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them,  
Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We  
16a have no king but Cæsar. Then <sup>ap</sup> delivered he him there-  
fore <sup>aq</sup> unto them to be crucified. <sup>ar</sup> Luke xxiii. 18.

<sup>b</sup> crime<sup>c</sup> Behold,<sup>d</sup> Crucify! Crucify!<sup>e</sup> the <sup>15</sup> omit the<sup>f</sup> Pilate therefore saith<sup>g</sup> Jesus answered him, Thou wouldst<sup>h</sup> for this cause <sup>27</sup> add up <sup>28</sup> omit And<sup>i</sup> If thou release this man <sup>31</sup> every one that<sup>j</sup> out<sup>k</sup> omit the<sup>l</sup> They therefore<sup>7</sup> Jesus therefore came forth<sup>10</sup> When therefore the chief priests and the<sup>12</sup> Take him yourselves<sup>16</sup> this word<sup>17</sup> add he<sup>20</sup> release <sup>21</sup> add that I<sup>24</sup> omit at all<sup>38</sup> omit And<sup>34</sup> on<sup>36</sup> at<sup>38</sup> And it was Preparation-day<sup>41</sup> Then therefore<sup>8</sup> he<sup>18</sup> crime<sup>18</sup> palace<sup>22</sup> crucify<sup>25</sup> had been<sup>29</sup> Upon this<sup>32</sup> these words<sup>36</sup> omit that is<sup>39</sup> it was<sup>43</sup> up

CONTENTS. The dreadful tragedy is still continued; and that it is so in the same line of thought and with the same object as before, is evident from the parallelism between chap. xviii. 33-40 and chap. xix. 1-16. The subject is the humiliation of Jesus, the half-hearted efforts of Pilate to release Him, and the determined hostility and cruelty of the Jews.

Ver. 1. Then Pilate therefore took Jesus and scourged him. It is the scourging itself that is the prominent thought, not the fact that it was

inflicted by order of Pilate. The name of the governor indeed is mentioned, but this seems simply to be because without his authority the punishment could not have been inflicted. The punishment is itself the main point,—the increasing sufferings of Jesus and His deepening humiliation and agony as, under the pressure of His sinful nation, He goes onward to the cross. In the first picture (chap. xviii. 33-40) Jesus is simply the prisoner bound; in the second, that before us, He is the prisoner scourged and treated with con-

temptuous mockery of his royal claims. This mockery follows the scourging.

Vers. 2, 3. **And the soldiers platted a crown of thorns, and placed it on his head, and they put on him a purple robe, and they came unto him and said, Hail, King of the Jews! and they gave him blows with their hands.** All is in mockery of His royal claims: first the crown of thorns, secondly the purple robe, thirdly the coming to Him with mock obeisance, fourthly the 'Hail, King of the Jews,' fifthly the blows with their hands. We include this last in the same series as the acts preceding it, for the Evangelist, by his peculiar language, appears to mean more than that Jesus was struck. The blows are the mock presents that the subjects bring. They approach Jesus with lowliness and with a 'Hail;' and then, as if laying their offerings at His feet, they strike Him. The picture of humiliation and suffering is drawn in striking colours, and its *advance* upon that of chap. xviii. must be obvious to every reader. A similar advance appears in the next two verses.

Vers. 4, 5. **And Pilate went out again, and saith unto them, Behold, I bring him out to you, that ye may perceive that I find no crime in him. Jesus therefore came forth, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. And he saith unto them, Behold, the man!** The difference between the situation here and that at chap. xviii. 39 does not lie so much in the actual words in which Pilate proclaims the innocence of Jesus, although it is possible that the change of order is not a matter of entire indifference. It lies rather in the fact that on the former occasion he left Jesus in the palace, and came out alone to the Jews with his verdict of acquittal; while here he leads Jesus forth, exhibiting such a bearing towards Him that the Jews may themselves perceive that he considers Him to be innocent. It is further evident from the words of ver. 8, 'he was the more afraid,' that a mysterious awe had already taken possession of his soul, an awe increased no doubt by the message of his wife (Matt. xxvii. 19) which had just before reached him. In his words 'Behold, the man!' we have a clear trace of the sympathy and pity existing in his breast. He speaks of the 'man,' not of the 'king.' It is the human sufferer to whom he draws attention, one whose sufferings and whole aspect would have melted any heart not dehumanised by personal envy or that fierce spirit of revenge which has marked ecclesiastical fanaticism in every age. So far, however, as he expected to touch the hearts of the Jews by the spectacle presented to them, he is doomed to be disappointed.

Ver. 6. **When therefore the chief priests and the officers saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify! Crucify!** The *advance* from what is stated at chap. xviii. 40 to the present point is at once perceptible. Then the Jews refused to have Jesus released to them, and cried out for Barabbas. Now their cry reaches its culmination, 'Crucify! Crucify!'—**Pilate saith unto them, Take him yourselves, and crucify him; for I find no crime in him.** The words do not seem to contain any serious authorisation on the part of Pilate to the Jews to crucify Jesus. The latter at least did not understand them in that sense, or they would probably have at once availed themselves of the permission given. The emphatic 'yourselves' guides us to the true interpretation. There is in

the words partly scorn of the Jews, partly the resolution of Pilate to free himself from all responsibility in the guilty deed which he began to see could hardly be avoided. It is as if he would say, 'Is He to be crucified? then it shall be by yourselves, and not by me.' The Jews, accordingly, are sensible that they dare not avail themselves of the permission. They must adduce fresh reasons for the sentence of condemnation which they desire.

Ver. 7. **The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by the law he ought to die, because he made himself Son of God.** The 'We' is emphatic. 'Thou, Pilate, mayest pronounce Him innocent; and He may be innocent of all such crimes as are wont to be tried at thy bar. But *We* have a law, and that law denounces death to persons like Him; for He made Himself Son of God.' The law referred to is Lev. xxiv. 16, and the crime is that Jesus represented Himself to be what He really was. Such was the guilt of the Jews. Not upon false pretences, but upon the greatest of all falsehoods, the misinterpretation of the truth,—in the thickest of all darkness, the light itself made darkness,—they hurried Jesus to His doom. The effect upon Pilate of this charge they had not anticipated.

Vers. 8, 9. **When Pilate therefore heard this word, he was the more afraid; and he went again into the palace, and saith unto Jesus, Whence art thou?** The remarkable expression by which the Evangelist designates the language of the Jews deserves our notice,—'this word.' It is not a mere saying that the Jews have uttered. It is a 'word.' The Divine is in it. At the very time when they are pursuing the Lord of glory to His death, they are unconsciously impelled by a Divine power to ascribe to Him the glory that is His due. We are not indeed to suppose that Pilate felt this. But the strange awe—the sense of mystery—that had come over him before is deepened in his mind. He must renew his investigation with all seriousness; and for this purpose he goes again into the palace, taking Jesus with him, and asks Him, 'Whence art thou?' The question has certainly no reference to the place where Jesus had been born, or from which He had come to Jerusalem. It is a deeper origin that is asked after. Art Thou from this world, or from another? a man, or from the gods?—**But Jesus gave him no answer.** The question had not been asked in the spirit to which an answer was never refused. Pilate had no sense either of sin or need. Even had he been answered and received the answer as true, he would only have bestowed freedom upon One who sought nothing for Himself: he would not have 'believed.' That this was the state of his mind is clearly indicated in the words next spoken by him.

Ver. 10. **Pilate therefore saith unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? Knowest thou not that I have power to release thee, and that I have power to crucify thee?** There is no trace of spiritual feeling in these words; nothing but the sense of offended dignity, that to one in his position, and possessed of his power, a poor prisoner should decline to reply. Hence the position of 'to me,' at the head of the sentence, and hence the twice repeated 'power,' to emphasize the authority which he possessed. The mention of 'release' comes first, as the consideration most likely to tell upon one in the danger in which Jesus



stood. To this remark of Pilate an answer is given.

Ver. 11. Jesus answered him, Thou wouldst have no power at all against me, except it had been given thee from above; for this cause he that delivered me up unto thee hath greater sin. These words call attention to the fact that the source whence Pilate derived his power,—‘from above,’—was the same as that whence Jesus came. In using his power, therefore, against the Son of God, he was really fighting against God. ‘For this cause,’ also, he that delivered Jesus up to him (not Judas or Caiaphas only, but whosoever shared in the deed) had ‘greater sin.’ Why ‘greater’? Partly, perhaps, because the delivering up was the first step in the process of invoking against God the power of God; mainly, because the sin thus committed was, on the part of those who were guilty of it, a sin against greater light than in Pilate’s case. The Jews professed to know (and ought to have known) God better than the heathen judge. They ought to have known better than he the true nature of that source ‘from above,’ from which they derived their power. Therefore their sin, a sin against God, was in them ‘greater’ than in him. In this reply Jesus had done more than speak as an innocent man. He had assumed a position of superiority alike to His accusers and His judge. The effect produced upon Pilate was proportionally great.

Ver. 12. Upon this Pilate sought to release him. The verb ‘sought’ in the original implies that Pilate now made repeated attempts, not recorded, to effect with consent of the Jews the release of his prisoner. The attempts were vain. —But the Jews cried out, saying, If thou release this man, thou art not Cæsar’s friend: every one that maketh himself a king speaketh against Cæsar. The term ‘Cæsar’s friend’ had been, since the time of Augustus, conferred by the emperor upon legates and prefects as an honourable distinction. It is not improbable that the hope of obtaining it might even now be floating before Pilate’s eyes. The argument, although not deliberately reserved for this moment, but dictated by the quick insight of excited passion, was thus fitted to tell most powerfully upon him. How it did tell the sequel shows. We shall err, however, if we imagine that the only object of John in mentioning the circumstance is to point out the consideration to which Pilate yielded. He has another object far more nearly at heart,—to exhibit the woeful, the *self-confessed*, degradation to which the proud Jewish people, by their opposition to Jesus, had reduced themselves. Something similar had been already noted by him at chap. xi. 48, but that fell far short of what is exhibited here. In order to effect their guilty end, they by whom the friendship of Cæsar was regarded as degradation and not honour, appeal to the desire for it as a noble ambition; they who would fain have trampled the authority of Cæsar under foot as the source of the oppression from which they suffered, and of the loss of all the ancient glories of their nation, represent the effort to maintain it as one that loyalty ought to make. With what clearness does the Evangelist see these wretched ‘Jews,’ in the very act of accomplishing their ends, plunging themselves into the greatest depths of ignominy and shame! The effect of the appeal is not lost upon Pilate.

Ver. 13. When Pilate therefore heard these

words, he brought Jesus out, and sat down on the judgment seat at a place called the Pavement, but in Hebrew, Gabbatha. The decisive moment is now come; and, according to the frequent method of our Evangelist, the way is prepared for it by the mention of several particulars. First, we have the place. It was not in the palace, but at a spot called in the Aramaic tongue Gabbatha, and in the Greek the Pavement. The Greek name was probably given because the floor was laid down in the mosaic work common in those days in places of importance, such as theatres and halls of justice, and before altars of the gods. It literally means inlaid with stones. The Aramaic word Gabbatha signifies a hill or elevated spot of ground, so that we are to think of a spot in the open air where a tribunal was erected on a rising ground, the top of which was laid with tessellated pavement. The time is next noted.

Ver. 14. And it was Preparation-day of the passover; it was about the sixth hour. It is not to be denied that the difficulties connected with each of these two clauses are very great; and we have again to regret, as at chap. xviii. 28, that in a commentary such as this it is impossible to do justice to the question. We shall endeavour to indicate as clearly as our space will permit the solution that we propose.

1. It is urged that the first clause means, ‘It was the preparation of the Passover,’ that is, the day before it. Difficulties are thus removed at the cost of making John contradict the earlier Evangelists as to the night when the Last Supper was instituted, and the day when Jesus was crucified. Apart from all consideration of the new difficulty thus created, we observe—(1) That the interpretation thus offered makes the Evangelist contradict himself (comp. what has been said on chap. xviii. 39; and bear in mind that Pilate at the moment there spoken of released Barabbas, Matt. xxvii. 26; Mark xv. 15; Luke xxiii. 25). The Passover was therefore then begun. To speak now of the day preceding it is impossible. (2) The translation ‘the preparation’ cannot be accepted. There is no article in the original. The Greek term must be rendered either ‘a preparation,’ or it must be taken in its well-known sense of ‘Friday.’ (3) It has never been shown that the day before the Passover was called ‘The preparation of the Passover.’ It has been conjectured that it was, because it is believed that the day before the Sabbath was called ‘The preparation of the Sabbath.’ *No such name as this last has been pointed out.* It did not—we may venture to say that, without a different mode of connecting the two words, it could not exist. The whole foundation upon which rests the idea of a day called ‘the preparation of the Passover’ is removed.

2. A second solution is offered. By ‘preparation’ we are to understand Friday; by ‘the Passover’ the Paschal feast; by the whole expression, ‘It was Friday of the Paschal feast.’ There is much in this to be accepted, for it appears from Josephus that the seven days’ festival was often designated ‘the Passover,’ and there can be no doubt as to the rendering, ‘Friday.’ The difficulties, if nothing more can be said, are—(1) To see why the words ‘of the Paschal feast’ should be added; they are unnecessary; and they do not occur at ver. 31, although the day there spoken of is the same as that before us here.

(2) That it is not easy to exclude from the original the thought of the 'Paschal lamb.' That is the proper rendering of the Greek, and the rendering which lies closest to the whole conception and drift alike of the chapters with which we are now dealing and of the special verses in which mention of 'the Passover' is made. Notwithstanding these difficulties, we accept this rendering as in part at least the meaning of the Evangelist. The difficulties will vanish when we consider that it is not *all* his meaning. For, in truth, he seems to be led to his choice of the particular form of expression which he employs by the tendency that we have so frequently had occasion to observe in him,—the tendency to see things in the *doubles* presented by symbols and their realities. Both the leading words of the clause before us are susceptible of this *double meaning*; and it is because they are so that we find them here. Thus—(1) The former word is to be taken in its *double* sense, 'a preparation' or 'Friday.' (2) The words rendered 'the Passover,' or as it might be simply 'the *Pasche*,' are to be taken in their *double* sense, 'the Paschal lamb' or 'the Paschal feast or week.' At the time when John wrote, if not also much earlier, both senses were in use in the Christian Church. Exactly then as in chap. iii. 8 John has in view the double meaning of the Greek word for spirit or wind, so here he has in view the double meaning of these expressions. The day now dawning, and the events now occurring, were 'a preparation of the Paschal lamb'—yet not of the lamb of the *Jewish* feast, but of the *true Paschal Lamb, Jesus Himself*,—of the Lamb now on His way to be sacrificed for the life of His people. It was also 'Friday of the *Pasche*.' Both these meanings are prominent to the eye of the Evangelist; and as, with the ready appreciation of symbolism possessed by the symbolic mind, he sees that one of his deepest thoughts can be expressed by words which shall at the same time express an outward incident of the scene, he chooses his language for the sake of the richer meaning to which he is thus able to give utterance.

The view now taken derives confirmation from the fact that at ver. 31 of this chapter, where the word 'a preparation' or 'Friday' is again used, the addition 'of the Passover' is dropped. Why is this? Because by the time we come to that verse the true Paschal Lamb has been slain: it is no longer possible, therefore, to speak of a preparation of Jesus. If, on the other hand, the word denotes the weekly day of preparation ('Friday'), it is clear that in ver. 31 any explanatory addition would be superfluous. The particular view to be taken of chap. xix. 28-37 will also lend confirmation to what has been said.

The second clause of the words with which we now deal is much more easily explained than the first: 'and it was about the sixth hour.' If this hour be according to Jewish modes of reckoning 12 (noon), we are in direct conflict with Mark xv. 25, 'and it was the third hour, and they crucified Him.' There, at 9 A.M., the crucifixion takes place. Here, at noon, the sentence is not yet pronounced. The main elements of the solution are to be found in what has been already said with regard to the mode of reckoning time employed in this Gospel. 'The sixth hour' is thus 6 A.M., an hour supplying us, as nearly as it is possible for us to imagine, with the space of time needed

for the events already past that night, as well as with that needed for things still to be done before the crucifixion at 9 A.M. To these considerations has to be added the fact, that Pilate now for the first time took his formal place upon the judgment seat, and pronounced sentence with the suitable solemnities of law. But by Roman law this could not be done before 6 A.M.; and it is much more likely that Pilate would embrace the earliest opportunity of ridding himself of a disagreeable case than that he would carry on the process until noon.

Both the place and the time for the last step in the trial of Jesus have now been mentioned. Pilate is on his judgment seat, on a spot elevated above the people. The true Lamb of God is before him ready for the sacrifice. The awful 'hour is come.'—And he saith unto the Jews, Behold, your King! The words are not spoken sarcastically of Jesus, but contemptuously of the Jews. Pilate had no motive for being sarcastic with regard to the former. He had been impressed by the spectacle of meekness and innocence which Jesus presented. He would have set Him free had he possessed sufficient earnestness and depth of moral character to carry into effect what he knew to be right. We cannot, therefore, suppose that he has any wish to treat Jesus with contempt. But all the more that this was the case, and that his own conscience was reproving him for his weakness, would his contempt be increased for those who were urging him to act unjustly. His secret displeasure with himself would seek satisfaction in his indignation and disgust with them. He had shown his contempt for the Jews from the first (comp. ver. 35), and now, with that contempt raised to its highest point, he says, 'Behold, your King.' It is possible also that in these words the Evangelist sees one of those unconscious prophecies or Divine declarations concerning Jesus of which we have had repeated illustrations in this Gospel.

Ver. 15. They therefore cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him. Instinct tells them that the last moment when they may accomplish their object is arrived: and, roused to the utmost pitch of fury by the words of Pilate, they cry out, with a quick repetition of words corresponding to their feelings, Let him be hurried off to crucifixion. But Pilate will still further provoke them, still further pour out his contempt upon them.—Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? Then follow those words evidently so full of meaning to the Evangelist.—The chief priests answered, We have no king but Cæsar. The chief priests, the heads of the Theocracy of Israel, give the answer, which thus comes upon us with a more terrible force than it could otherwise have done. What an answer is it! It is the utterance of self-condemnation, the renouncing of the chief honour of the chosen people, the casting away of what had most distinguished them in the past, of what they hoped most from in the future, 'We have no king but Cæsar.' God is rejected; Messianic hope is trampled under foot. In the moment of securing the death of their true King, 'the Jews,' by the mouth of their leaders and representatives, plunge themselves into the lowest depths of guilt and shame.

Ver. 16a. Then therefore delivered he him up unto them to be crucified. The tragedy has reached its climax; and in this single sentence the rest of the direful story may be told.

## CHAPTER XIX. 16b-22.

*The Nailing of Jesus to the Cross.*

16b, 17 **A**ND "they took<sup>1</sup> Jesus, and led *him* away.<sup>2</sup> And he bearing his cross<sup>3</sup> went<sup>4</sup> forth into a<sup>5</sup> place called *the place* of a skull, which is called in the<sup>6</sup> Hebrew Golgotha: 18 Where they<sup>7</sup> crucified him, and two other with him,<sup>8</sup> on either 19 side one, and Jesus in the midst. And 'Pilate'<sup>9</sup> wrote a title, and put *it* on the cross. And the writing was,<sup>10</sup> JESUS OF 20 NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS. This title then read many of the Jews: for the place<sup>11</sup> where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city:<sup>12</sup> and it was written in Hebrew, 21 and Greek, and Latin.<sup>13</sup> Then said the chief priests of the Jews<sup>14</sup> to Pilate, Write not, The King of the Jews; but that 22 he said,<sup>15</sup> I am King of the Jews. Pilate answered, What I have written I have written.

<sup>1</sup> They therefore received<sup>2</sup> And bearing the cross for himself he<sup>3</sup> with him two others <sup>7</sup> add also<sup>8</sup> add of the city <sup>10</sup> omit to the city<sup>12</sup> The chief priests of the Jews therefore said<sup>2</sup> omit and led him away<sup>4</sup> unto the <sup>5</sup> omit the<sup>8</sup> and there was written<sup>11</sup> and Latin and Greek<sup>15</sup> but, That man said

<sup>a</sup> Matt. xxvii. 31, 33; Mark xv. 20, 22; Luke xxiii. 26, 33.  
<sup>b</sup> Heb. xiii. 12.  
<sup>c</sup> Matt. xxvii. 37, 38; Mark xv. 25, 27; Luke xxiii. 33, 38.

Ver. 16b. They therefore received Jesus. 'They,' not the soldiers, but the chief priests of ver. 15 and the Jews of ver. 14. The verb is that of chap. i. 11, 'His own accepted him not.' Now they did 'receive' Him, but only to hurry Him to a cruel death. It will be observed how much this peculiar force of the verb is brought out by the true reading of the verse, which omits: 'and led him away.'

Ver. 17. And bearing the cross for himself he went forth unto the place called the place of a skull, which is called in Hebrew Golgotha. It is a trace of the accuracy of John both in observing and relating facts, that he is the only Evangelist who mentions the circumstance. Nor is there any contradiction betwixt this statement and that of the three earlier Gospels which tells us that they compelled Simon of Cyrene to bear the cross after Jesus. Jesus had borne it at first, but had afterwards been compelled through fatigue to resign it. On 'went forth' comp. on chap. xviii. 1. The place was called Golgotha, 'the place of a skull,' probably as being a small round hillock. The most interesting point to be noticed is the manner in which John dwells upon the meaning of the name. The 'place of a skull' is the emblem to him of the sad transaction about to be completed there. The Evangelist adds,

Ver. 18. Where they crucified him, and with him two others, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst. On the lingering torture of death by crucifixion it is unnecessary to dwell. We learn from the earlier Gospels that the two crucified along with Jesus were robbers (Matt. xxvii. 38; Mark xv. 27). To this death they too must

have been doomed by the Roman power, and as we find the Roman governor writing the inscription and Roman soldiers taking part in the crucifixion and dividing the spoils (comp. ver. 23), it is reasonable to think that it was also a Roman, not a Jewish, arrangement by which the two robbers were suspended on either side of Jesus. If so, the object must have been still more to bring out that idea of His royalty with which Pilate to the last mocked the Jews. Not only, however, did he mock them thus. Following the custom of the time, by which an inscription describing the crime for which a malefactor suffered was nailed to the cross, he ordered this to be done now, and he himself dictated the words.

Ver. 19. And Pilate also wrote a title, and put it on the cross; and there was written, JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS. The object, as before, was to do despite to the Jews, not to Jesus. To the last moment their terrible crime must, under the overruling providence of God, be brought home to them.

Ver. 20. This title then read many of the Jews, for the place of the city where Jesus was crucified was nigh. The language in which this proximity of Golgotha to the city is spoken of is in a high degree remarkable: not 'the place was nigh to the city,' but 'the place of the city was nigh.' We are not to imagine that by these words the Evangelist means to say that the place of the crucifixion was within the city. He knew well, as every one knew, that it was 'without the gate.' It is the power of the idea, not perverting the fact but leading to a special view of it, that meets us here, as so often elsewhere. The





*From the painting by GEROME.*

**THE SHADOW OF THE CROSS.**

place outside the city, but really belonging to the city, is viewed only in this latter aspect, as '*the place of the city*,' because a closer connection is thus established between the crime committed there and the guilty city of Jerusalem.—And it was written in Hebrew and Latin and Greek, the three great languages of the then known world.

Ver. 21. The chief priests of the Jews therefore said to Pilate, Write not, The King of the Jews, but, That man said, I am King of the Jews. The offence taken might have been, and probably was, expected by Pilate; but the mode in which it is described is again highly worthy of our notice. This is the only occasion on which we meet with the expression 'the chief priests of the Jews'; and as it occurs in such close connection with the words 'the King of the Jews,' we can hardly

doubt that the latter words determined the form of the phrase before us. On the one side we see the King of the Jews defeated, yet victorious; suspended on the cross, yet proclaimed to be what He is in all the great languages of the world; set before us as universal King. On the other side we see the chief priests of the Jews victorious, yet defeated; their object apparently accomplished, yet its accomplishment turned to their own shame, and their Victim's glory.—Their request was denied in the most curt and contemptuous language.

Ver. 22. Pilate answered, What I have written I have written. It is impossible to mistake the feeling of the Evangelist that in all this the finger of God is to be traced. Those who refuse to 'believe' shall yet be compelled to own that Jesus is King.

## CHAPTER XIX. 23-30.

*The Crucifixion.*

- 23 **T**HEN 'the soldiers,<sup>1</sup> when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also *his* coat:<sup>2</sup> now the coat<sup>3</sup> was without seam, woven from the top throughout. They said therefore among themselves,<sup>4</sup> Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be: <sup>5</sup> that the scripture might be fulfilled, 'which saith,<sup>6</sup> They parted my raiment<sup>7</sup> among them, and for my vesture they did cast lots.'<sup>8</sup>
- 25 These things therefore the soldiers did. 'Now<sup>9</sup> there stood by the cross of Jesus his 'mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleophas,<sup>10</sup> and / Mary Magdalene. When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, <sup>11</sup> whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, <sup>12</sup> Woman, behold<sup>13</sup> thy son!
- 27 Then saith he to the disciple, Behold<sup>14</sup> thy mother! And from that hour that<sup>15</sup> disciple took her unto his own home.
- 28 After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished,<sup>16</sup> ' that the scripture might be fulfilled,<sup>17</sup> saith, <sup>18</sup> I thirst.
- 29 Now<sup>19</sup> there was set<sup>20</sup> a vessel full of vinegar: ' and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put *it* upon hyssop,<sup>21</sup> and put<sup>22</sup> *it* to his mouth. When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, <sup>23</sup> It is finished: and he bowed his head, and <sup>24</sup> gave up the ghost.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Matt. xxvii. 35; Mark xv. 24; Luke xxiii. 34.

<sup>b</sup> Vera. 28, 36; chap. vii. 38, xiii. 18, c Ps. xxii. 18.

<sup>d</sup> Matt. xxvii. 55, 56; Mark xv. 40; Luke xxiii. 49. <sup>e</sup> Chap. ii. 1. <sup>f</sup> Chap. xx. 1, 11, 16, 18. <sup>g</sup> Chap. xiii. 23. Comp. chap. xx. 2. <sup>h</sup> Chap. ii. 4.

<sup>i</sup> Ver. 24. <sup>k</sup> Ps. lxi. 21. <sup>l</sup> Matt. xxvii. 48; Mark xv. 36.

<sup>m</sup> Chap. xvii. 1. <sup>n</sup> Matt. xxvii. 50.

<sup>1</sup> The soldiers therefore

<sup>4</sup> omit which saith

<sup>7</sup> But <sup>8</sup> Clopas

<sup>12</sup> are now finished

<sup>16</sup> they put therefore a sponge full of the vinegar upon hyssop

<sup>17</sup> brought

<sup>2</sup> tunic

<sup>6</sup> and upon my vesture they cast lots

<sup>10</sup> Behold,

<sup>14</sup> omit Now

<sup>18</sup> and delivered up his spirit

<sup>3</sup> to one another

<sup>11</sup> the

<sup>15</sup> add there

**CONTENTS.** This paragraph details some of the events of the crucifixion, but not in strict historical sequence to vers. 21 and 22. The conference with Pilate there alluded to, following as it did the reading of the inscription spoken of in ver. 20, must have been later than the moment when the division of the raiment of Jesus by the soldiers began. We can hardly doubt that this latter would begin as soon as the cross was erected and Jesus nailed to it.

Ver. 23. **The soldiers therefore, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also his tunic: now the tunic was without seam, woven from the top throughout.** The soldiers are no longer a 'band.' They are only four in number, the usual number of a Roman guard (comp. Acts xii. 4). When they went out against Jesus to the garden of Gethsemane it was in force, because they knew not how far He might really be the leader in a popular insurrection against the government. There was evidently no occasion for such a fear now, and their number therefore could with perfect safety be reduced. By the 'garments' here spoken of we are to understand all the articles of clothing belonging to Jesus with the exception of His 'vesture' or tunic,—viz. His sandals, girdle, outer robe, head-dress, etc. These they divided into four parts, giving to each of the four soldiers a part. Another course had to be taken with the tunic or under-garment. By it we are without doubt to understand the long garment reaching to the feet, woven so as to fit closely to the body (not pieced or sewed together), which was worn by the high priest,—the garment of Rev. i. 13... It is hardly possible not to feel that this vestment is to John the symbol of the fact that He who now hangs upon the cross as King is also Priest of His people. We are next told what was done with the vestment.

Ver. 24. **They said therefore to one another, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be.** Both in the dividing and in the casting of lots the Evangelist sees Scripture fulfilled.—**That the scripture might be fulfilled, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture they cast lots.** The quotation is from Ps. xxii. 18, and is accurately reproduced from the Septuagint.—**These things therefore the soldiers did.** The words may either be intended to emphasize the presence of God in the scene, as He made the Roman soldiers fulfil His Scripture; or may simply arise out of the intense interest with which John narrates each particular of these eventful hours.—Another scene is now presented to us.

Ver. 25. **But there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother, and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene.** In Matt. xxvii. 55 we are told of 'many women beholding from afar.' But as there is nothing to say that the moment was the same as that now before us, the supposed contradiction between 'by the cross' and 'from afar' disappears. If the third of the women here mentioned be the same as the second, we shall have two sisters of the same name in one family; for 'sister' cannot mean cousin. The high improbability of this leads to the supposition that we have here *four* women, in two groups of two each. This view is confirmed by the fact that the lists of apostles are in like manner given us in groups of two, and by what

does not seem to have been urged as an argument upon the point, that the four women seem designedly placed in contrast with the four soldiers. (Not that the Evangelist makes the number in order to suit his purpose; but that out of the 'many' spoken of by Matthew he *selects* four for its sake. It is the same habit as that of which we have seen so much,—the *selection* of particulars to illustrate the historical idea which he is desirous to unfold.) On the supposition that four women are mentioned, it appears from the earlier Gospels that the second, here unnamed, was Salome, John's own mother. Whether Clopas may be identified with Cleopas (Luke xxiv. 18) it is impossible to decide.

Vers. 26, 27. **When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold, thy son. Then saith he to the disciple, Behold, thy mother; and from that hour the disciple took her unto his own home.** The act thus recorded has been variously interpreted; by some as in its main purpose an act of filial care for the mother whose soul was now about to be pierced by the sword spoken of in the prophetic word of Simeon (Luke ii. 35); by others as a formal renunciation of her, that He may surrender Himself wholly to the will of His heavenly Father. It is in the first of these two lights that we must chiefly regard it. Then we can best explain the words of ver. 27, which are evidently the Evangelist's commentary upon what had just passed; and the renunciation spoken of had really taken place at chap. ii. 4.

Ver. 28. **After this, Jesus knowing that all things are now finished, that the scripture might be accomplished, saith, I thirst.** It is a question whether the words 'that the Scripture might be accomplished' are to be connected with what precedes or with what follows. In favour of the former connection it may be said—(1) It is John's practice to point out the fulfilment of Scripture after, not before, the event fulfilling it. (2) It is his usual practice to notice the fulfilment of Scripture in what is done *to* Jesus, rather than in what is done *by* Him to fulfil it. (3) The use of the word 'now' seems to show that we have already reached a complete accomplishment of Scripture. It would thus appear that it is the intention of the Evangelist to present to us a word spoken by Jesus at a moment when He knew that Scripture had been already fulfilled. He is in the position of One whose work is done, and for whom nothing remains but to depart. The strong counter-argument is that everywhere else in this Gospel (see chap. ii. 22) 'the scripture' denotes some *special passage*. As, however, we cannot doubt that John regarded the utterance here recorded as fulfilling Ps. lxi. 21 (see chap. ii. 17), the difference between the two interpretations is less than it at first appears.—That thirst was a great part of the agony of the cross we know; nor in all probability should we think of more, were it not the manner of John to relate minor incidents, not for themselves alone, but for the sake of the deeper meaning which he always sees to be involved in them. This *manner* of the Evangelist, therefore, compels us to ask whether there may not be a deeper meaning in this cry? Let us turn to chap. iv. 7. There, immediately after mention of 'the sixth hour,' Jesus says to the woman of Samaria, 'Give me to drink.'



Here, in close contiguity with another 'sixth hour' (ver. 14), He says, 'I thirst.' But we have already



Hyssop.

to supply a reed. It is simply a small bunch of

seen in the language of chap. iv. 7 the longing of the Redeemer for the fruits of that work which He was then accomplishing in toil and weariness; and we are thus led to think of something of the same kind here. It was not merely to temper suffering that Jesus cried, but it was for refreshment to the body symbolizing a deeper refreshment to the soul. — The request thus made was answered.

Ver. 29. There was set there a vessel full of vinegar: they put therefore a sponge full of the vinegar upon hyssop, and brought it to his mouth. It is possible that the vinegar here referred to may have been the mixture of vinegar and water used by the Roman soldiers to quench their thirst; or it may even have been a vessel of vinegar itself, of which large quantities were used at the Passover. The 'hyssop' cannot be equivalent to the 'reed' of Matt. xxvii. 48 and Mark xv. 36, for the hyssop plant was of too low and bushy a habit

hyssop, which was most probably attached to the end of a reed. A piece of sponge soaked in vinegar was fastened to the hyssop end of the rod, and the draught was in this way conveyed to the lips of Jesus.

Ver. 30. When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished; and he bowed his head, and delivered up his spirit. It is not said that Jesus took much of the vinegar, and the probability is that He did not. When He had taken it He exclaimed, 'It is finished.' The word is the same as in ver. 28, but now He utters what there He 'knew.' It is the shout of victory, not the cry of satisfaction that suffering is at an end. Having said this, 'He bowed His head' (which had been previously erect), and 'delivered up His spirit.' The verb used for 'delivered up' is peculiarly important. The choice of the word leaves no doubt as to the meaning of the Evangelist. However true it is that by the cruelty of man the death upon the cross was brought about as by its natural cause, there was something deeper and more solemn in it of which we must take account. It was His own free will to die. There is in Him an ever-present life and power and choice in which He, even at the very last moment, offers Himself as a sacrifice (Heb. ix. 14). He tells us Himself of His life, 'No one taketh it away from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again' (chap. x. 18); and these words have now their illustration. Compare the language of His dying cry, recorded by Luke (chap. xxiii. 46): 'Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit.' We forbear to enter further upon the physical cause of the death thus recorded. It is impossible not to feel that the speculations which have been indulged in on this subject have done more to shock Christian feeling than to satisfy a legitimate spirit of inquiry.

## CHAPTER XIX. 31-37.

### *The Body of Jesus on the Cross.*

- 31 **T**HE Jews therefore, because it was the <sup>a</sup> preparation,<sup>1</sup> that <sup>a</sup> See ver. 14.  
<sup>b</sup> the bodies should <sup>a</sup> not remain upon the cross on the <sup>b</sup> Deut. xxi.  
sabbath day, (for that sabbath day was an high day,) <sup>23</sup>  
besought <sup>a</sup> Pilate that their legs might be broken, and *that*  
32 they might be taken away. Then came the soldiers,<sup>4</sup> and  
brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified  
33 with him. But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was  
34 dead already, they brake not his legs: But one of the soldiers  
with a spear pierced his <sup>c</sup> side, and <sup>d</sup> forthwith came there out <sup>e</sup> Chap. xx.  
35 blood and water. And he that saw <sup>f</sup> it <sup>g</sup> bare <sup>h</sup> record,<sup>5</sup> and his <sup>i</sup> Comp. 1  
record <sup>6</sup> is true: and he knoweth that he saith true, <sup>j</sup> that ye <sup>k</sup> John v. 6, 8  
<sup>l</sup> Comp. chap.  
<sup>m</sup> xv. 27, xxi.  
<sup>n</sup> Chap. xx. 31

<sup>1</sup> it was Preparation-day <sup>2</sup> might <sup>3</sup> asked of <sup>4</sup> The soldiers therefore came  
<sup>5</sup> straightway there came forth <sup>6</sup> And he that hath seen  
<sup>7</sup> omit it <sup>8</sup> hath borne witness <sup>9</sup> witness



36 might believe.<sup>10</sup> For these things were done,<sup>11</sup> that <sup>ε</sup> the scrip- <sup>ε</sup> See ver. 24.  
 ture should <sup>12</sup> be fulfilled, <sup>κ</sup> A bone of him shall not be broken.<sup>13</sup> <sup>λ</sup> Ex. xii. 46;  
 37 And again another scripture saith, <sup>ζ</sup> They shall look on him <sup>μ</sup> Num. ix. 12;  
 whom they pierced. <sup>ν</sup> Ps. xxxiv. 20.  
<sup>ξ</sup> Zech. xii. 10;  
<sup>ο</sup> Rev. i. 7.

<sup>10</sup> that ye also may believe  
<sup>12</sup> might

<sup>11</sup> came to pass  
<sup>13</sup> crushed

CONTENTS. Jesus is now dead, and this paragraph relates the events immediately following, before His body was removed from the cross.

Ver. 31. The Jews therefore, because it was Preparation-day. It has already been remarked (on ver. 14) that the word here used has in itself the double meaning of 'preparation' and of 'Friday.' Here, without the article, it cannot have the general sense of 'the preparation.' Any thought of preparation, too, lying in the word must, as appears clearly from the following clause, be connected with the Sabbath and not with the Passover. Had the latter been thought of, it would surely have been expressly mentioned, to obviate the mistake to which the use of a well-understood technical term could not fail to give rise. These words, therefore, so far from supporting the view of those who think that the legal Passover had not yet been celebrated, tend rather in the opposite direction. Nor is there any weight in the argument that, had the term been used as we have supposed, the Evangelist would have explained it for the benefit of his Greek readers. It was the *Christian* name for Friday, and to Greek Christians it could suggest nothing else. — That the bodies might not remain upon the cross on the Sabbath day (for that Sabbath day was an high day), asked of Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. It is generally allowed that the Sabbath here referred to is termed 'high,' because it was one of more than ordinary solemnity, deriving its importance on this occasion from the fact that it coincided with either the first or the second day (both being important) of the Paschal festival. — The operation of breaking the legs, though not sufficient to cause death, would naturally hasten it. Under any circumstances it prevented the escape of the prisoners.

Ver. 32. The soldiers therefore came and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him. The bodies had been suspended on the cross with Jesus in the midst. It is natural to suppose that the soldiers, approaching from two opposite sides, would proceed in the order thus mentioned: each would strike his blow on one malefactor's body; then they would come to Jesus.

Vers. 33, 34. But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs; but one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and straightway there came forth blood and water. The explanation of the fact here recorded has always been felt to be attended with peculiar difficulty. The idea that Jesus was not dead, but that death was produced by the spear-wound, must at once be set aside. It is inconsistent with the distinct language of the Evangelist, which states the fact, — and not merely what the soldier thought, — that Jesus was 'dead already.' It is inconsistent with

what we have been previously told, that Jesus had 'delivered up' His spirit into the hands of His Father. And it is not less inconsistent with the symbolism of the passage, which would have been inadmissible had not John believed that death was past. But the impossibility that blood and water should issue from the side of a person already dead is urged on physiological grounds. It might be possible to adopt the explanation of some eminent commentators, that we have here a unique appearance based upon a unique situation. If it be a general truth that the moment death comes corruption begins, and if, notwithstanding, Jesus 'saw no corruption,' we are prepared to expect that the phenomena accompanying His death will transcend our experience; and it may well be that we have such phenomena before us here. Before we resort, however, to such an explanation, we ought to ask whether, when we take all the circumstances into account, it is really necessary. We remark therefore that—(1) There is nothing to prevent our assuming that the spear-wound was inflicted the *instant after death*. The Evangelist does not convey the slightest hint to us that any interval elapsed between the two events, and the nature of death by crucifixion is such as to call us to think of the latest possible moment as 'that of death.' 'Pilate marvelled if He were already dead' (Mark xv. 44). (2) In conformity with the opinion of all expositors, the region of the heart must be looked upon as that penetrated by the spear. (3) The 'blood and water' derive *all* their importance from that symbolical meaning which they have in the eyes of John. The circumstance which more than any other has led inquirers astray in judging of what we have here before us is, that they have supposed it to be the aim of the Evangelist to establish the fact that Jesus was really put to death. But, as we shall see on ver. 35, this is certainly not the point before him. The fact now spoken of has no connection whatever with *proof* that death had taken place; and it is mentioned solely for the sake of the deeper meaning which it involves. (4) These things being so, it is obviously a matter of no moment what the *quantity* of 'blood and water' that issued from the wound may have been. The smallest quantity will suffice; and will suggest the truth intended as well as the largest.

But it has never been proved that such a *small* quantity might not issue from a wound thus inflicted. The wound would be a large one; the iron point of the spear, we may be sure, was both heavy and rough; and if the instant after death the pericardium and heart were pierced, there is no difficulty in supposing such an effusion of blood and of water, or *serum*, as could not fail to attract the attention of the beholder, and suggest to his mind lessons of deep spiritual significance. If this be so, the literal interpretation of the passage may be retained.

What the water and blood symbolized to John must be learned from the general tenor of his writings. The 'blood' brings to mind the sacrifice for the world's sin (chap. i. 29), the life laid down for the life of the world (chaps. vi. 51, x. 15), the cleansing of and by atonement (1 John i. 7; Rev. i. 5, v. 9). The 'water' recalls the teaching of chaps. iii. 5, vii. 38, xiii. 8, 10; and symbolizes the abiding gift of the Spirit of holiness. Thus in His death Jesus is presented as the Source of Life, in all its purity and spiritual power. That this section of the Gospel stands in closest connection with 1 John v. 6 seems to us beyond doubt: what is the exact nature of the relation between the passages is a question which belongs to the exposition of the Epistle, and cannot be investigated here.

Ver. 35. *And he that hath seen hath borne witness, and his witness is true; and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye also may believe.* It is of himself that the Evangelist speaks: compare 1 John i. 1, 2, 3. The witness that he bears is 'true.' The word differs from that which is used in the second member of this verse and in chap. xxi. 24 ('We know that his witness is true'). It designates the testimony as *genuine* and *real*. Not only is it *truthful*, but it is all that testimony can be: the witness will not deceive, but—more than this—in regard to the matter which he here attests he cannot have been deceived or mistaken. See the notes on chaps. iv. 37, viii. 16. The object of this solemn testimony is that they may 'believe;' not simply may believe the facts, but may rest in a true and settled faith upon Him of whom these wonders can be related. The significance belonging to the facts thus solemnly commemorated is now further illustrated (vers. 36, 37): they are the fulfilment of the Divine counsels expressed in Scripture.

Vers. 36, 37. *For these things came to pass, that the scripture might be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be crushed; and again another scripture saith, They shall look on him whom they pierced.* The passages referred to in the first of these quotations seem to be Ex. xii. 46 and Num. ix. 12, rather than Ps. xxxiv. 20. It is probable, however, that the last of these is founded upon the first two. Great importance was attached by the Jews to the precept that no bone of the Paschal Lamb should be broken. God's counsel, typified in this, is now fulfilled in the true Paschal Lamb (see chap. i. 29).

In the second passage referred to (Zech. xii.

10), the Evangelist sets aside what is universally allowed to be the false translation of the Septuagint, and translates from the Hebrew. It is not impossible that in this passage also there may be a distant allusion to the rites of the Passover; for the bitterness of the 'mourning' alluded to seems to be founded on the mourning of Egypt for its first-born. But, whether this be so or not, it will not be denied that the allusion in the Prophet to Him who is to come as the manifestation of God to His people is distinct. The true reading of the passage in Zechariah is, 'They shall look on Me whom they pierced,' where the word 'Me' is to be explained by the fact that the Sender is identified with the Sent, the Lord with His prophet. It is worthy of notice that the words translated 'pierced' in vers. 34 and 37 are different, from which we may conclude that the Evangelist does not rest in the mere detail of the piercing, but dwells upon the wider thought, that Israel rejected and crucified its Lord. Such, however, had been God's counsel; and thus spoken, not only by the law but by the *Prophets* (comp. chap. i. 45), this counsel is now fulfilled in Jesus.

One remark more may be permitted on the peculiar light in which the whole of this remarkable scene seems to present itself to the eye of the Evangelist. Jesus is obviously here, as indeed He has been throughout the Gospel, the true Paschal Lamb (chaps. i. 29, vi.). Yet He is that Lamb looked at not simply in the moment of dying, but as, in dying (in that dying which has been going on throughout His whole suffering life and on y culminates now), the true substance of His people's Paschal feast, their nourishment, their life. The conduct of the Jews to Jesus as He hangs upon the cross thus assumes the form of an inverted, a contorted, Passover. They had that morning lost their legal Passover,—had lost even the shadow, because they rejected and despised the substance. 'Yet,' says the Evangelist, 'they found a Passover. Let us follow them to the cross. There let us see the righteous dealings, the deserved irony, of the Almighty, as He makes their cruel mockings of the true Paschal Lamb shape themselves into a Passover of judgment, of added sin and deepened shame.' If the passage be looked at in this light—the only light, as it seems to us, which at once explains the general structure of the section and the peculiar expressions employed—it will be found to be full of the most important consequences alike for the biblical critic and for the dogmatic theologian.

## CHAPTER XIX. 38-42.

### *The Burial of Jesus.*

38 <sup>a</sup> AND after this <sup>1</sup> Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of <sup>a</sup> Jesus, but secretly <sup>b</sup> for fear of the Jews, besought <sup>a</sup> Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave *him* leave. He came therefore, and took the body of 39 Jesus.<sup>3</sup> And there came also <sup>c</sup> Nicodemus, which at the first

<sup>a</sup> these things

<sup>b</sup> asked of

<sup>c</sup> and took away his body

<sup>a</sup> Matt. xxvii. 57-61; Mark xv. 42-47; Luke xxiii. 50-56.

<sup>b</sup> See chap. vii. 13.

<sup>c</sup> See chap. iii. 1.

came to Jesus<sup>4</sup> by night, and<sup>5</sup> brought<sup>6</sup> a mixture of myrrh  
 40 and aloes, about an hundred pound *weight*. Then took they<sup>7</sup>  
 the body of Jesus, and<sup>8</sup> wound<sup>9</sup> it in 'linen clothes' with the<sup>d Chap. xi. 44</sup>  
 41 spices, as<sup>10</sup> the manner of the Jews is to bury.<sup>11</sup> Now in the<sup>e Luke xxiv. 12; chap. xx. 5, 6, 7.</sup>  
 place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the<sup>f Mark xvi. 1; Luke xxiii. 56, xxiv. 1.</sup>  
 garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid.  
 42 There laid they Jesus therefore because of the Jews' <sup>g Ver. 14.</sup> prepara-  
 tion *day*; for the<sup>h Ver. 31.</sup> sepulchre was nigh at hand.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>4</sup> him<sup>5</sup> omit and<sup>6</sup> bringing<sup>7</sup> They took therefore<sup>8</sup> bound<sup>9</sup> cloths<sup>10</sup> even as<sup>11</sup> to prepare for burial

<sup>12</sup> There therefore, because of the Preparation-day of the Jews (because the sepulchre was nigh at hand), laid they Jesus.

CONTENTS. The paragraph before us records the committal of the body of Jesus to the tomb.

Ver. 38. And after these things Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, asked of Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore and took away his body. It is easy to understand that Pilate should at once grant the permission asked. He had no interest in keeping the body; and by giving it up to disciples of Jesus he

would have a fresh opportunity of at once doing despite to, and exasperating, the Jews. It seems not unlikely that in the fact that disciples receive the body of the Lord the Evangelist beholds a token of the care with which it was watched over by His Father in Heaven. Joseph, however, was not alone.

Ver. 39. And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to him by night, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight. The quantity of spices



Myrrh.



Aloes.

thus brought by Nicodemus is certainly remarkable; and hence some have shrunk from taking the words in their literal sense, holding that 'a hundred pound' (especially as here qualified by 'about') may be an expression merely denoting a great quantity. Others, following the suggestion of 2 Chron. xvi. 14, have supposed that, when part of the mixture of spices had been spread on the linen cloths in which the body was to be wrapped, the remainder was destined for 'a burning.' Whether this be accepted or not, the pas-

sage referred to is interesting as bringing before us the burial of a King. The distinct identification of this Nicodemus with the ruler who came to Jesus by night (chap. iii.) is undoubtedly significant. The humiliation of the King of Israel (chap. iii. 3, xii. 13), so far from discouraging, does but strengthen the once weak faith of the true disciple; and in contrast with (and—may we not add—in expression of shame and penitence for) timorous hesitation, we read of the lavish offering of a love open and avowed. The declara-

tion of chap. xii. 32 begins to receive its fulfilment.

Ver. 40. They took therefore the body of Jesus, and bound it in linen cloths with the spices, even as the manner of the Jews is to prepare for burial. It is hardly possible to suppose that the fact mentioned in the last clause is without a purpose. The words 'even as' would of themselves seem to indicate as much as this. Let us remember then the importance which was attached by all to a splendid burial (comp. Luke xvi. 22); let us bear in mind that by 'the Jews' we are here to understand not the nation, but rather that portion of the nation which best exemplified its narrowness and bigotry, and which included its more respectable class; lastly, let us think of the worldly circumstances of Joseph, and in all probability of Nicodemus; and we shall feel that the Evangelist desires to call our attention to the striking fact, that, notwithstanding the igno-

minious death to which Jesus had been put, and though the rage of His enemies appeared to have so completely triumphed, there were yet those who prepared for Him as honoured and as costly a burial as could await any 'Jew.' That the word 'burial' is used to describe the wrapping of the body in the linen cloths may arise from the Evangelist's desire to mention a circumstance which brings strongly into relief the condition in which these cloths were afterwards found (chap. xx. 7). The body having thus been prepared for burial, the actual entombment alone remains to be spoken of.

Ver. 41. Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden; and in the garden a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid. Nothing further is told by John of the garden and of the sepulchre thus referred to. We learn only from the other Evangelists that they belonged to Joseph, and that the sepulchre, as is



Rock Tomb.

common round Jerusalem, was hewn in the rock. It is not easy to say whether the Evangelist, in referring to the particulars he mentions, may have desired to prepare the way for the reality of the resurrection. They certainly tend to do so, because they help to show that, when the grave was found empty, none but Jesus could have risen from it. It seems more probable, however, that they are mentioned with the view of bringing out the honour paid to Jesus in His death. He was laid, not in the place of common burial, but in a garden, and in a new sepulchre, where no one had been laid before Him. Finally, we are informed why they laid Jesus there in the condition in which He was.

Ver. 42. There therefore, because of the Preparation-day of the Jews (because the sepulchre was nigh at hand), laid they Jesus. These words can hardly mean that Jesus was laid in this

tomb simply as a matter of convenience, owing to the nearness of the Sabbath. The meaning must rather be that, owing to this nearness, the embalming had been more readily left in that unfinished state of which we read in the other Evangelists. The proximity of the tomb to the city has little bearing on the former, it has a distinct bearing on the latter point. It is unnecessary to say more on the question of 'the Preparation-day of the Jews.' There is only one simple and natural meaning of the words. It was now Friday afternoon; the Sabbath was at hand; the hours of that part of the Friday devoted to preparation for the Sabbath had set in. It was desirable, therefore, that the work of embalming the body should for the present be brought to a close. The reader cannot fail to be struck with the touching pathos lent to the whole sentence by making it close with the words 'laid they Jesus.'

## CHAPTER XX. 1-10.

*The Empty Grave.*

1 **T**HE <sup>1</sup> first *day* of the week cometh <sup>2</sup> Mary Magdalene early, <sup>3</sup> when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth <sup>4</sup> the  
 2 stone <sup>5</sup> taken away from the sepulchre. Then she runneth, <sup>6</sup> and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, <sup>7</sup> whom  
 Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the  
 Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have  
 3 laid him. <sup>4</sup> Peter therefore went forth, and that <sup>5</sup> other disciple,  
 4 and came to <sup>6</sup> the sepulchre. So <sup>7</sup> they ran both together: and  
 the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the  
 5 sepulchre. And <sup>6</sup> he <sup>7</sup> stooping down, and *looking in*, saw <sup>8</sup> the  
 6 *linen clothes* <sup>9</sup> lying; yet went he not in. Then <sup>10</sup> cometh <sup>11</sup> Simon Peter <sup>12</sup> following him, and <sup>13</sup> went into the sepulchre,  
 7 and seeth <sup>14</sup> the linen clothes <sup>15</sup> lie, <sup>16</sup> And <sup>17</sup> the napkin, that was  
 about <sup>18</sup> his head, not lying with the linen clothes, <sup>19</sup> but wrapped <sup>20</sup> together in a place by itself. Then went in also <sup>21</sup> that <sup>22</sup> other  
 8 disciple, <sup>23</sup> which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw, and  
 9 believed. For as yet <sup>24</sup> they knew not <sup>25</sup> the <sup>26</sup> scripture, <sup>27</sup> that  
 10 he must rise again from the dead. Then <sup>28</sup> the disciples <sup>29</sup> went  
 away again unto their own home.

<sup>1</sup> But on the <sup>2</sup> that the stone had been <sup>3</sup> She runneth therefore  
<sup>4</sup> the <sup>5</sup> and they came towards <sup>6</sup> And <sup>7</sup> omit he  
<sup>8</sup> he seeth <sup>9</sup> cloths <sup>10</sup> omit Then cometh  
<sup>11</sup> add therefore also cometh <sup>12</sup> add he <sup>13</sup> beholdeth <sup>14</sup> lying  
<sup>15</sup> upon <sup>16</sup> rolled <sup>17</sup> therefore <sup>18</sup> the <sup>19</sup> add also  
<sup>20</sup> For not even yet knew they <sup>21</sup> omit Then <sup>22</sup> add therefore

**CONTENTS.** The victory of Jesus over His enemies, in the midst of apparent defeat, is still the subject before us. The preceding chapter had closed with the statement that He was laid in the tomb: when the narrative of chap. xx. begins, the tomb is empty. The great event of the Resurrection had already taken place. The victory of Jesus over the world and death had been consummated, for at the very instant when their attack was fiercest He had escaped their hands. The question may indeed be asked, whether chap. xx., as containing an account of the risen Saviour, ought not to constitute a separate section of the Gospel. But the reply is easy. The death and resurrection of Jesus always accompany one another. They are complementary parts of one whole, each impossible without the other. It must be distinctly kept in view that the leading thought of the Fourth Gospel is not that of defeat *in* suffering followed by victory, but of triumph *through* and *over* suffering.

The first paragraph of chap. xx., extending to the close of ver. 10, may best be described as Preparation for the risen Saviour.

Ver. 1. But on the first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth that the stone had been taken away from the sepulchre. Few parts of the Fourth Gospel illustrate better than these words the principle of selection upon which it is composed. They mention Mary Magdalene alone; and yet we learn from her own words in ver. 2, '*we* know,' that she could not have been alone,—that she formed (as indeed *we* are expressly told by the other Evangelists) one of a group of women who came on the morning of the first day of the week to finish the embalming of the body of Jesus. Again, we here read of 'the stone taken away from the sepulchre,' though no mention had been made of this stone in the previous narrative. It is obvious that here, as elsewhere, we have to deal not so much with events of full historical detail as with events *selected* on account of their bearing upon the idea which the Evangelist wishes to illustrate. In the present instance that idea is not the mere fact of the Resurrection of Jesus, but the nature of His post-resurrection state. With this His appearance

to Mary Magdalene is closely associated; and hence the Evangelist, omitting all mention of the other women, concerns himself with her alone.

Of Mary, then, we are told that she came to the sepulchre on the first day of the week 'early,' and 'when it was yet dark.' Similar expressions are found in the other Gospels: thus Luke speaks of 'early' (literally 'deep') 'dawn,' and Mark (ver. 2) records that the women came to the sepulchre 'very early.' The only difficulty that presents itself here is occasioned by words which follow in the same verse of Mark's Gospel, which state that the sun had risen. The discussion of this difficulty does not belong to this place, and we must content ourselves with mentioning three solutions which have been proposed. (1) That the words of Mark xvi. 2 are intended only as a general indication of time, *at or about sunrise*, the rays of dawn being in the sky, but the measure of light still small. (2) That, though the sun had risen, yet haze or cloud obscured its light. (3) That John's reference to the darkness strictly belongs to the time when Mary set forth, not to the time of her arrival, as indeed the words might be rendered 'Mary is coming to the sepulchre:' compare ver. 3, where we read that Peter and John 'were coming to,' *i.e.* they *came towards* the tomb. It is easy to understand that the writer of the last words in chap. xiii. 30 would in thought naturally dwell upon the outward darkness as symbolical of the mental state of Mary and her fellow-disciples.

The stone which had been fitted into the door of the sepulchre had been taken away; and, without observing the particulars which are recorded below (vers. 6, 7), Mary hastens to tell what she has seen.

Ver. 2. *She runneth therefore and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him.* That the Lord is risen does not enter into her thoughts: she can but imagine that enemies have stolen away the body so precious alike in her eyes and in those of her fellow-disciples, and she hastens to tell the tale to those who would feel with her most deeply and would be most able to help in the sad extremity. The statement of Mary produces its immediate effect upon the disciples.

Ver. 3. *Peter therefore went forth, and the other disciple, and they came towards the sepulchre.* The word rendered 'went forth' is so often used in this Gospel in regard to the most solemn events in the life of Jesus, as implying a Divine mission, the accomplishment of a Divine purpose, that we may well doubt whether the Evangelist does not here employ the word in the same pregnant sense. It is possible also that there is design in the manner in which the names of the two apostles are introduced: not 'Peter and the other disciple went forth,' but 'Peter went forth, and the other disciple.' The other examples of this construction in the Fourth Gospel tend to show that here John intends to set forth Peter as the main person in the narrative: thus the whole ground is cut away from those who hold that the design of this section is to bring 'the other disciple' into peculiar prominence.

Ver. 4. *And they ran both together, and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre.* It is extremely probable that

John was the younger and thus also the more active of the two. The same supposition throws light on the next verse.

Ver. 5. *And stooping down, and looking in, he seeth the linen cloths lying; yet went he not in.* A feeling of awe and mystery in all probability possessed him. He was afraid to enter. It was not so with Peter.

Vers. 6, 7. *Simon Peter therefore also cometh following him; and he went into the sepulchre, and beholdeth the linen cloths lying, and the napkin that was upon his head not lying with the linen cloths, but rolled together in a place by itself.* Peter, ever bold and daring, is less overcome by awe than his companion. He goes into the sepulchre, and when within sees not only that the linen cloths are lying there, but also, what John had not observed (ver. 5), that the covering placed upon the head of Jesus had been carefully (for this idea is clearly implied in the word) rolled up, and laid in a place by itself,—in all likelihood where the head had lain. By the mention of these circumstances, the Evangelist appears to indicate the calm and orderly manner in which Jesus had left the sepulchre. They were inconsistent with the idea, either of a hasty flight, or of a violent removal of the body: and it is probable that John would hint at the dawning consciousness of this in Peter's mind by changing the verb 'seeth,' used in his own case, into 'beholdeth' in the case of his companion. The effect produced upon John by Peter's entrance into the sepulchre was what might have been expected. He takes courage, and also enters.

Ver. 8. *Then went in therefore the other disciple also, which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw and believed.* It is certainly not a belief of the statement of Mary that is expressed in this last word. As John stood gazing on the signs which bore their silent witness that the body of Jesus had not been taken away by violent hands, the truth revealed itself to him,—that Jesus had of Himself left the tomb. But even more than this is probably intended by the word 'believed.' To receive the truth of the Resurrection was to be led to a deeper and more real faith in Jesus Himself. The uncertainties, doubts, and difficulties occasioned by the events of the days just passed disappeared from John's mind. He 'believed' in Jesus as being what He truly was, the Son of God, the Saviour of man. The words which follow are the reflection of the Evangelist upon the ignorance manifested by himself and by Peter as to the meaning of the prophetic word. Certainly the disciples' belief in a risen Saviour was not the result of any assured conviction that the Resurrection was foretold in Scripture.

Ver. 9. *For not even yet knew they the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead.* The connection between this and the preceding verse is readily perceived:—'He saw and believed,'—sight was needed to evoke this faith,—for not even yet had they learnt that thus it was 'written that the Christ should suffer and rise again from the dead' (Luke xxiv. 46). It may perhaps be doubted whether self-reproach is to be found in this statement,—to the extent, at least, that is commonly supposed. The words seem rather to flow from the conviction which has so strong a hold of the Evangelist, that only in the presence of actual experience do the power and meaning of the Divine Word come forth. The

*fact* was needed in order to illustrate and explain the *scripture*; and then that faith which has been resting on the inward perception of the glory of Jesus receives confirmation from the discovery that the truth received was long ago made known by God as a part of His own counsel. As in all other places (unless chap. xix. 28 be an exception, see note there) John uses 'the scripture' in the sense of a particular passage of Scripture (see chap. ii. 22), we are here led to think of Ps. xvi. 10 as

probably being before his mind. It will be remembered that this was 'the scripture' to which Peter first made appeal as a prophecy of the Resurrection of our Lord (Acts ii. 27).

Ver. 10. The disciples therefore went away again unto their own home. We are not told why or in what frame of mind they thus returned to their own homes. One thing is clear: they believed that Jesus was risen, and that it was vain to search for Him in the tomb.

## CHAPTER XX. 11-18.

*Jesus risen.*

11 **B**UT Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping: and<sup>1</sup>  
 as she wept,<sup>2</sup> she stooped down, and looked into the  
 12 sepulchre, And seeth<sup>3</sup> two<sup>4</sup> angels in<sup>5</sup> white sitting, the<sup>6</sup> one  
 at the head, and the<sup>7</sup> other<sup>8</sup> at the feet, where the body of  
 13 Jesus had lain. And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest  
 thou? She saith unto them, 'Because<sup>9</sup> they have taken away  
 14 my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him. And<sup>10</sup>  
 when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and<sup>11</sup> saw  
 15 Jesus standing, and<sup>12</sup> knew<sup>13</sup> not that it was Jesus. Jesus saith  
 unto her, 'Woman, 'why weepest thou? whom seekest thou?  
 She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if  
 thou have borne<sup>14</sup> him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him,  
 16 and I will take him away. Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She  
 turned<sup>15</sup> herself, and saith unto him,<sup>16</sup> 'Rabboni; which is to  
 17 say, 'Master.<sup>17</sup> Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am  
 not yet ascended to my<sup>18</sup> Father: but go to my<sup>19</sup> brethren,  
 and say unto them, 'I ascend unto my Father, and 'your  
 18 Father; and to<sup>20</sup> 'my God, and your God. 'Mary Magdalene  
 came and told<sup>21</sup> the disciples that she had<sup>22</sup> seen<sup>23</sup> the Lord,  
 and that he had spoken<sup>24</sup> these things unto her.

<sup>1</sup> omit and                   <sup>2</sup> add therefore                   <sup>3</sup> beholdeth  
<sup>4</sup> omit the                   <sup>5</sup> one                   <sup>6</sup> omit Because  
<sup>7</sup> omit And                   <sup>8</sup> and she beholdeth Jesus standing, and perceived  
<sup>9</sup> didst bear                   <sup>10</sup> turneth                   <sup>11</sup> add in Hebrew  
<sup>12</sup> Teacher                   <sup>13</sup> the                   <sup>14</sup> omit to                   <sup>15</sup> cometh, bringing word to  
<sup>16</sup> omit that she had                   <sup>17</sup> I have seen                   <sup>18</sup> that he said

CONTENTS. The paragraph now before us presents an advance upon that last considered. There we had only preparation for the risen Jesus; here we have Jesus risen. There all was negative: Jesus was not in the tomb, and the inference was that He was risen. Here all is positive. The risen One appears to Mary, proclaiming Himself, and sends a message to His disciples.

Ver. 11. But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping. Peter and John had returned to their homes. Mary had followed them when they first ran to the sepulchre; but (probably in

consequence of their eager haste) she had not reached it before they departed. Nothing at least is said of her having met them and been addressed by them. She stands there with no thought of a resurrection in her mind, but believing only that the body has been taken away, and therefore weeping with loud lamentation (comp. on chap. xi. 34, 35).—As she wept therefore she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre. Nothing could be more natural than that she should desire to view the spot associated with all that was so dear to her.



Ver. 12. **And beholdeth two angels in white sitting, one at the head, and one at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain.** In each of the accounts of the Resurrection an angelic appearance is recorded,—in every case an appearance to the women who came to the tomb: by Peter and John no angels had been seen (vers. 5, 6). The 'white' garments are the symbol of purity and glory; see the references in the margin, and also Rev. iii. 4, 5, vi. 11, xix. 14, etc. That one of the angels was 'at the head' and the other 'at the feet where the body of Jesus had lain,' is to be regarded as expressive of the fact that the body was wholly under the guardianship of Heaven. This is not the place to enter upon any discussion of the general credibility of the angelic appearances recorded in Scripture. They are too often and too circumstantially spoken of to permit us to resolve them into mere figures of speech: nor can we have any difficulty in believing that in the great universe of God there should be such an order of beings as that described by the term 'angels.' If, however, they may exist, their manifestation of themselves must be regarded as also possible; and the manner of the manifestation—their appearing to some and not to others, their appearing suddenly and then as suddenly disappearing—is to be looked at as dependent upon laws of which we can say nothing, because we have ourselves no practical experience of them.

Ver. 13. **And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith unto them, They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.** Mary's reply betrays neither consternation nor even surprise: as has been well said, her excitement is such that the wonderful ceases to be wonderful to her. Her words are exactly the same as those spoken by her in ver. 2, except that, as she is now expressing simply her own feelings and not those of companions, the utterance becomes more tender: thus for 'the Lord' and 'we know' we here read 'my Lord,' 'I know.' She thus comes before us as more fully prepared for receiving a manifestation of the risen Saviour; and that no answer of the angels is recorded may be regarded as a token on the part of the Evangelist that to such a faith Jesus will reveal Himself directly, and without the interposition of any other.

Ver. 14. **When she had thus said, she turned herself back; and she beholdeth Jesus standing, and perceived not that it was Jesus.** Mary has answered the inquiry of the angels; and, satisfied that the Lord is not in the sepulchre, she turns round to see if information regarding Him can be obtained from any other source. Could we think that the morning was still dark, it might be possible to trace Mary's non-recognition of Jesus to that cause: but, if light was already dawning when she came first to the sepulchre, day must by this time have fully broken. That she did not know Jesus must, therefore, have proceeded from some other cause. This could not be the outward glory of His appearance, or she would not have supposed Him to be the gardener (ver. 15). Nor does it seem desirable to resort to the explanation offered by many, that glorified corporeity has the power of making itself visible or invisible, or of assuming different forms of manifestation at its pleasure. Much may be attributed to Mary's total want of preparation for the fact. The idea that

Jesus had risen from the grave had not yet dawned upon her: the form now in her presence *could* not be His: no supposition lay so near as that it was the gardener who had drawn near. More, however, must be said; and the key to the solution of the difficulty is to be found in Luke xxiv. 16 (see also chap. xxi. 4). Her 'eyes were holden' that she should not discern her Lord. She was not yet ready for any such recognition as might correspond to the new stage of existence upon which He had entered. She would have seen the human friend,—Jesus as He had been, not as He now was. Some further training, therefore, is still needed, and then the glorious revelation shall be given.

Ver. 15. **Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou?** The object of the questions seems to be, to recall Mary to herself and to awaken more deliberate thought. She is confounded by all that has happened, overwhelmed by her emotions, and hence unable to judge justly of what she is to see. The questioning and answering bring her back to calmness and self-possession.—**She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou didst bear him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away.** So much is Mary absorbed in her own thoughts, and so completely is her mind filled with one great subject, that she imagines that every one must at once enter into her feelings. Accordingly she does not even mention the name of Jesus, but asks whether the gardener has borne 'Him' away. She seeks but to learn where He is, that (for no recollection of woman's weakness presents itself to hinder the thought) she may take Him to another tomb. As she speaks, her faith and love are drawn forth in increasing measure, and the moment is at hand when they shall be satisfied.

Ver. 16. **Jesus saith unto her, Mary.** That single word completes her present training. Nor is this wonderful. She is calmer now: the intervening conversation has produced this effect. Then again we cannot doubt that there would be more of the old tenderness of Jesus in the pronunciation of her name than in the words as yet spoken to her. The very mark, indeed, of the relation between Jesus and His people, when that relation is conceived of in its most tender form, is that 'He calleth His own sheep by name' (chap. x. 3). We are not to imagine that it is only the sound of the voice that is now recognised by Mary. By the name, by the tone in which the name is uttered, a whole flood of recollections is brought up. All the deepest and most solemn impressions that had been produced upon her by her former intercourse with Jesus are re-awakened in power. She recalls not merely what was most human but what was most Divine in Him. Yet it would seem, from the epithet that she immediately applies to our Lord, that she thinks of Him as standing to her in some at least of the old relations. It is not strange that it should be so: any experience that she had had of resurrections through the power of Christ had been of resurrections to the former conditions of life. But now she is prepared for more, and therefore she shall be taught to know Jesus fully.—**She turneth herself, and saith unto Him in Hebrew, Mabboni, which is to say, Teacher.** The title thus used by Mary is probably the provincial form *Rabban* or *Rabbi*, and it is found in the New Testament



only here, and in the Gospel of Mark (chap. x. 51), noted, as is well known, for its use of expressions from the common tongue. It means properly 'My Master,' and is thus expressive of love and devotedness as well as of respect and reverence. As Mary uttered the word, she must have endeavoured to fall down at the feet of her Lord, embracing them (comp. Matt. xxviii. 9).

Ver. 17. **Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and my God and your God.** Many different interpretations have been given of these words, some coarse, others either requiring the introduction into the text of thoughts that are not there, or too far-fetched and mystical.

The meaning has been made more difficult by a want of sufficient attention to the force of the words 'Touch me not;' for these words do not express the touch of a moment only, but a touch that continues for a time. They are equivalent to 'Keep not thy touch upon me,' 'Handle me not,' 'Cling not to me.' Mary would have held her Lord fast with the grasp of earthly friendship and love. She needed to be taught that the season for such bodily touching of the Word of Life was past. But, as it passed, the disciples were not to be left desolate: the season for another touching—deeper, because spiritual—began. Jesus would return to His Father, and would send forth His Spirit to dwell with His disciples. Then they should see Him, hear Him, handle Him, touch Him, in the only way in which He can now be seen and heard and handled and touched. In a true and living faith they shall embrace Him with a touch never more to be withdrawn or interrupted. Hence the important word 'brethren.' Those to whom the message is sent are more than disciples; they are 'brethren' of their Lord. His Father is their Father, and His God their God. They are entering upon a state of spiritual fellowship with the Father similar to His own; and that fellowship is to be the distinguishing characteristic of their new condition. Thus the message sent by Mary to the 'brethren' of the Lord is not a mere message that He has risen from the grave. The thought of His resurrection is rather embraced only as a part of a new and permanent state of things which has come in. Even here, however, it is important to observe that the distinction between our Lord and His disciples is still carefully preserved. Jesus does not say 'Our Father,' but 'My Father and your Father;' so that the significance of 'brethren' lies in this, that the word is used in the very verse which proclaims so clearly the difference between Him and them.—The words 'the Father,' in the first part of the Lord's address to Mary, ought not to pass unnoticed. The reader may compare what has been said on chap. viii. 27. He will then see that the expression 'the Father' here combines in one thought all that is implied in the four designations that follow—'My Father,' 'Your Father,' 'My God,' 'Your God.'—'I ascend' is not to be understood (as some have

maintained) of an immediate ascension, inconsistent alike with the forty days of Acts i. 3 and with the subsequent narratives of this very Gospel. Yet neither are we to understand it as if it meant 'I will ascend' at some future day. The use of the present is to be explained by the consideration that the Resurrection of our Lord was really the beginning of His Ascension. At that point earth ceased to be the Saviour's home as it had been; and He Himself was no longer in it what He had been. Thus it might be said by Him, 'I ascend.' 'My ascent is begun, and shall be soon completed: then shall I enter into My glory, and the Spirit shall be bestowed in all His fulness.'

The contrast between the relation in which Jesus places Himself to Mary in this verse, and to Thomas in ver. 27 (comp. Luke xxiv. 39), has often been dwelt upon as if it afforded evidence of the untrustworthy nature of the whole narrative before us. Yet a moment's consideration will satisfy any one that the difference in our Lord's object on these two occasions necessarily involved a difference in His treatment of those whom He would lead to a full knowledge of Himself. Thomas has to be convinced that He who stands before him is indeed his Lord and Master risen from the grave. Mary believes that Jesus is risen, but needs further instruction as to His present state. To have treated the latter in the same manner as the former would have been to make Mary stop short of the very point to which Jesus would conduct her. To have treated the former as the latter would have been to unfold to Thomas the mystery of the resurrection state of Jesus, while he had not yet accepted the fact that the resurrection had taken place.

Ver. 18. **Mary Magdalene cometh, bringing word to the disciples, I have seen the Lord, and that he said these things unto her.** Mary has now recognised her Lord. We have seen her longing, with weeping eyes and breaking heart, for the Friend whom she had loved on earth. She was prepared for more, and more was given. Her Master was revealed to her, not as the human Friend alone, but in all that awakened at the same time her reverence and awe, in all that reminded her of the Divine in Him. Thus she was ready for another step, and she was led that step forward. She saw before her the risen and glorified Lord; and she could look forward to the future, inviting at the same time the disciples to join her in the prospect, as a future in which He who is for ever with the Father should be for ever, by His Spirit, with her and them, weeping changed into joy, and defeat into victory. With a message of this kind she goes to the disciples, and they are prepared for what is now to follow.

The relation between the appearance of Jesus to Mary and that to the women spoken of in Matt. xxviii. 9, can hardly be discussed here. The question belongs to the First Gospel, involving, as it does, considerations connected with the general structure of that Gospel upon which we are not able here to enter. It may be enough to say that we cannot regard the two appearances as identical: they differ in almost every circumstance.

## CHAPTER XX. 19-23.

*The First Manifestation of Himself by the Risen Lord.*

19 <sup>a</sup> THEN the same day at evening,<sup>1</sup> being<sup>2</sup> the first *day* of <sup>a</sup> Luke xxiv.  
the week, <sup>b</sup> when<sup>3</sup> the doors were<sup>4</sup> shut where the dis- <sup>36-40.</sup>  
ciples were assembled<sup>5</sup> <sup>b</sup> for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and <sup>b</sup> Ver. 26.  
stood in the midst, and <sup>c</sup> saith unto them, <sup>c</sup> Peace *be* unto you. <sup>c</sup> Chap. vii. 13.  
20 And when he had so<sup>7</sup> said,<sup>8</sup> he showed unto them<sup>9</sup> *his* hands <sup>d</sup> Vers. 21, 26;  
and his side. <sup>e</sup> Then were the disciples glad,<sup>10</sup> when they saw <sup>chap. xiv. 27.</sup>  
21 the Lord. Then said Jesus<sup>11</sup> to them again, Peace *be* unto <sup>e</sup> Chap. xvi.  
you: <sup>f</sup> as *my*<sup>12</sup> Father hath sent me, even so send I you.<sup>13</sup> <sup>22;</sup>  
22 And when he had said this, he <sup>g</sup> breathed on *them*, and saith <sup>Acts ii. 46;</sup>  
23 unto them, <sup>h</sup> Receive ye<sup>14</sup> the Holy Ghost: <sup>1</sup> Pet. i. 8.  
<sup>i</sup> Whose soever <sup>j</sup> sins ye remit,<sup>15</sup> they are<sup>17</sup> remitted unto them; <sup>j</sup> Matt. xxviii.  
and<sup>18</sup> whose <sup>k</sup> sins ye retain,<sup>19</sup> they are<sup>17</sup> retained. <sup>19; chap. iv.</sup>  
<sup>38, xvii. 3;</sup>  
<sup>18; Heb. iii. 1.</sup>  
<sup>Comp. Gen.</sup>  
<sup>ii. 7.</sup>  
<sup>Comp. chap.</sup>  
<sup>vii. 39, xvi. 7.</sup>  
<sup>Comp. Matt.</sup>  
<sup>xvi. 19, xviii.</sup>  
<sup>18.</sup>

- <sup>1</sup> When therefore it was evening on that day <sup>2</sup> omit being  
<sup>3</sup> and when <sup>4</sup> had been <sup>5</sup> omit assembled <sup>6</sup> add he  
<sup>7</sup> omit so <sup>8</sup> add this <sup>9</sup> add both  
<sup>10</sup> The disciples therefore rejoiced <sup>11</sup> Jesus therefore said  
<sup>12</sup> even as the <sup>13</sup> I also send you <sup>14</sup> omit ye <sup>15</sup> Spirit  
<sup>16</sup> If ye shall have remitted the sins of any <sup>17</sup> have been  
<sup>18</sup> omit and <sup>19</sup> if ye retain the sins of any

CONTENTS. Mary Magdalene has carried to the disciples the tidings with which she was charged. We have now the first appearance to them of the Risen Lord.

Ver. 19. When therefore it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and when the doors had been shut where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst; and he saith unto them, Peace be unto you. The message sent by the Lord to His disciples through Mary Magdalene was, 'I ascend unto the Father.' In other words, it was an intimation to them that that glorification had begun whose distinguishing feature would be the bestowal of the Spirit upon the members of Christ's body. In this thought lies the connection between the last narrative and that now before us, as well as the special point of view from which the Evangelist desires us to look at the manifestation of the Risen One which he is about to relate. In this also we see the difference of aim between John and Luke, in what is universally allowed to be the record of the same scene (Luke xxiv. 36-43). Luke would prove to us the reality of the Resurrection body, and would show that Jesus is substantially the same as He had been: John would show us that, while He is substantially the same, yet it is Jesus *filled with the Spirit* whom we behold. Hence the structure of John's narrative, in which it will be observed that the second 'Peace be unto you' (ver. 21) takes up again the same expression in ver. 19 (comp. on chap. xiii. 3), and that ver. 20 is in a certain sense parenthetical. This aim of our Evangelist also explains the stress which is laid upon the fact

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that this manifestation of Jesus took place 'when the doors had been shut.' That we are to see something miraculous in this is clear, alike from the repetition of the statement below (ver. 26), and from the whole tone and bearing of the narrative. Any idea, therefore, of the withdrawal of the bolts of the doors must be at once dismissed. It is impossible to do justice to the passage unless we admit that, at a moment when the doors were shut, and when no one could enter through them in the ordinary way, Jesus suddenly stood in the midst of the disciples. But this is all that we have any right to say. The travesty of the whole scene presented by those who have ridiculed the idea that a body with 'flesh and bones' (Luke xxiv. 39) should penetrate through the substance of the wood, finds no countenance in the words with which we have to deal. Such a thought is not present to the mind of John. He dwells himself, and he would have us dwell, upon the simple circumstance that, at an instant when an ordinary human body could not have entered the apartment because the doors were shut, the glorified Jesus 'came and stood in the midst.' Thus looked at, the passage sets before us what is no doubt miraculous, what is at variance with our present knowledge of the properties of a material frame, but at the same time nothing unworthy of the solemnity of the hour. As at Emmaus Jesus suddenly disappeared from those whose eyes were opened and who knew Him, so here He appears with equal suddenness to those who are ready to recognise Him. How He thus appeared through the physical obstacles presented by a room closed on every side it is not possible for us to say. The

properties of matter spiritualised and glorified are entirely unknown to us from any experience of our own, nor is light thrown upon them here further than this,—that Jesus, in His glorified humanity, had the power of being present when He pleased, without reference to the ordinary laws which control the movements of men. In this absolute subjection of the body to the spirit, John sees proof and illustration of the fact that in the person of Jesus dualism has disappeared, and that the perfect unity of body and spirit has been reached. The old struggle between the material and the spiritual, between the limited and the unlimited, has been brought to an end: the spiritual and the unlimited have absolute control. As 'the first Adam became a living soul,' so 'the second Adam became a life-giving Spirit' (1 Cor. xv. 45), and such life of the Spirit the disciples shall immediately receive.—The salutation of the Saviour when He manifested Himself was 'Peace be unto you;' and the meaning and force of the salutation are deepened by the contrast with the 'fear of the Jews' spoken of immediately before. As in chap. xiv. 27 (see commentary), this is the salutation of a departing Master, not of a dying Father. Amidst the troubles of the world upon which the disciples are about to enter, and when there is no help from man, Jesus is at hand to speak peace: 'In the world' they 'have tribulation,' but in Him 'peace' (chap. xvi. 33).—It will be observed that the Evangelist seems carefully to distinguish between 'the disciples' (vers. 18, 19) and 'the Twelve' (ver. 24). Hence we should naturally conclude that this manifestation of the Risen Lord was not limited to the apostles; and Luke xxiv. 33 shows that this conclusion is correct.

Ver. 20. **And when he had said this, he showed unto them both his hands and his side.** If the words of Luke xxiv. 40 are genuine, the feet were also shown; but the genuineness of that passage is too doubtful to permit us to argue from it with confidence. In whatever respects the glorified body of Jesus differed from what it had been before His death, there was at least enough of resemblance to make identification not only possible but the necessary result of careful observation; and it is worthy of notice that the very Evangelist who has given us the most striking conception of the change which it had undergone, is the one by whom the identification is also most clearly established. We shall err, however, if we think that the *only* object which Jesus had in view in showing His hands and His side was identification. He would also connect His present glorification with His past *sufferings*. Even now, amidst His glory, His people must not forget that His path to it had been the Cross. He is the Lamb that was 'slain' (comp. Rev. v. 6, 12).—**The disciples therefore rejoiced when they saw the Lord.** These words describe the effect of the manifestation upon the disciples (comp. chap. xvi. 22). They who thus rejoice when they see Him are prepared for further manifestations of His grace.

Ver. 21. **Jesus therefore said to them again, Peace be unto you.** The words are exactly the same as before (ver. 19), but they must have gone home with a deeper power to the hearts of the disciples, who now understood more fully the Person from whom they came. They prepare the way for the great commission to be given,—a commission which, amidst all the trials it would bring with it from the world, the disciples are to execute

in peace.—**Even as the Father hath sent me, I also send you.** The words 'even as' bring out the close correspondence between the mission of Jesus Himself and that upon which He sends His disciples. In both cases it was a mission of self-denying love to men; in both one of labour, suffering, and death, followed by glory; in both we have the thought of willing service imposed by an authority that is supreme. We have already met with words expressing a very similar thought in our Lord's intercessory prayer: 'Even as Thou didst send Me into the world, I also send them into the world' (chap. xvii. 18). But there is one important point of difference, which an English translation fails to exhibit. In chap. xvii. the Greek word for 'sent' is the same in both members of the sentence; in the verse before us it is otherwise. Here the former clause ('Even as the Father hath *sent* Me') contains the word of chap. xvii. 18 (*apostello*), but in the latter clause ('I also *send* you') the verb is different (*empo*). The distinction in meaning seems to be that the second word expresses *mission*, the first more properly *commission*. When the first is used, our thoughts turn to a special embassy, and special instructions which the ambassador receives; the second brings into view rather the authority of the sender and the obedience of the sent. Both words, therefore, may be used either of our Lord or of His disciples. Thus in more than twenty verses of this Gospel Jesus applies the second word to Himself (see especially chap. iv. 34, 'My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me'); whilst in such passages as chap. vi. 29, xvii. 3 (8, 18, 21, 23, 25), we find instead the more expressive word. In chap. v. 36, 37, and again in chap. vii. 28, 29, the two are brought together, as they are here; and the appropriateness of each word in its place may readily be seen. In chaps. v. 37 and vii. 28 our thought must rest chiefly on the Sender; but in chaps. v. 36 and vii. 29 on the commission which the Father has given to His Son. On the other hand, the word *apostello* is used by Jesus in regard to His disciples in chap. iv. 38 ('I sent you to reap') as well as in chap. xvii. 18; and is indeed the word from which the distinctive name of the Twelve, 'apostles,' is derived. Various thoughts are suggested here by the marked and sudden transition from one word to the other. It may be said with truth that, as chap. xvii. 18 has its primary application to apostles, the word which designates their special office was naturally chosen there; here, on the contrary (see note on ver. 19), the disciples in general are addressed,—the disciples who are the representatives of the whole Church of Christ. Again, the word by which Jesus here expresses the mission of His disciples (*empo*), is one which brings into relief their *separation* from His bodily presence: formerly they were continually at His side, but now they must be dismissed for their labour throughout the world (Matt. xxviii. 19). One other thought it is impossible to overlook. There is peculiar dignity in the avoidance on the part of the Risen Lord of that form of speech which would seem to identify two relations which (however closely they may sometimes be associated) are essentially distinct. No human disciples can really bear the commission of Jesus as Jesus bears that which He has received from the Father (comp. note on ver. 17). By design, therefore, the Lord here, reserving for Himself the higher word, speaks of the

disciples as His envoys to the world. The commission which they hold from Him receives separate mention in a later verse (ver. 23).

Ver. 22. **And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive the Holy Spirit.** Not only did the Risen Lord thus send His disciples on their mission to the world, He gave them also the preparation which should enable them to fulfil their trust. The literal and correct rendering of the original Greek is not 'Receive the Holy Spirit,' but 'Receive Holy Spirit;' the difference being, as was pointed out on chap. vii. 39, that by the latter expression we are to understand not the personal Holy Ghost, but His power or influence over the hearts of men. It was in the power of Holy Spirit that Jesus had entered upon His own ministry (Luke iv. 1, where the same expression is used as here); with the like preparation shall His Church enter upon the work to which she is called. The gift now bestowed is, therefore, not simply symbolical but real: at that moment the Spirit was given. All this is in perfect harmony with the words of chap. vii. 39, because at this moment the glorification of Jesus has begun (see note on ver. 17). The gift, too, was imparted not to apostles only, but to all the disciples present; it is a gift not for the ministry alone, but for the whole Church of Christ. If so, the interesting question immediately arises, What is the relation of the gift spoken of here to that bestowed at Pentecost? The answer would seem to be that here the gift relates to the inner life of the disciples, there to the more outward equipment for their work; here to the enlightenment and quickening of their own souls, there to preparation for producing an effect on others. Perhaps we may seek an illustration (to be applied, as always, with reserve) from the life of the Saviour Himself. As His public ministry began when the Holy Spirit descended on Him at His baptism, so did His apostles receive their full commission and power on the day of Pentecost. But as before His baptism the Holy Spirit had rested on Him continually, so now, before Pentecost, the same holy influence is bestowed on His disciples, preparing them for the day of final consecration to their work. It has, indeed, often been maintained that we have before us a promise and not a present gift. But such cannot be the meaning of the language which is here used. Even were it granted that the word 'Receive' might be understood as an assurance of a future gift, the action which accompanies the word must imply much more than this. 'He breathed on them: this surely was the outward symbol of an actual impartation—of His *breathing into* them (see Gen. ii. 7, where the same word is used) the power and influence of which He spoke. And yet it is true that this gift was both present (actual) and also future (a promise). As present, it brought with it the quickening of spiritual life; as future, it included in itself all that Pentecost gave. The former thought is important in relation to the development of the disciples: the latter in its connection with ver. 23, and especially in its presentation of the Redeemer as Himself the Giver of the Holy Spirit (chap. xvi. 26).

Ver. 23. **If ye shall have remitted the sins of**

**any, they have been remitted unto them; if ye retain the sins of any, they have been retained.** We regard two points as established from what has been already said. 1. The words of this verse are not addressed to apostles alone. 2. Though conjoined with a present impartation of the Holy Spirit, they belong really to the days when the disciples shall have fully entered on their work as representatives of their Lord and His witnesses in the world. This verse and the last stand in the closest possible connection: only when the Holy Spirit has been received can such a commission as this be executed. Without unduly entering on controverted ground, let us seek to collect the meaning which the words (which we have thought it desirable to render with unusual closeness) must necessarily bear. It is clear that *two* remissions of sin are spoken of,—two which agree in one. Where Christ's servants 'have remitted the sins of any,' these sins 'have been remitted unto them,'—remitted absolutely, *i.e.* remitted by God, for 'who can forgive sins but God only?' (Mark ii. 7). But as we know that the Divine forgiveness is suspended on certain conditions,—penitence and faith,—it follows that the remission granted by Christ's disciples must (since it agrees with the Divine remission) be suspended on the same conditions. Either, therefore, the disciples must possess unfailing insight into man's heart (such as in certain cases was granted to an apostle, see Acts v. 3), or the remission which they proclaim, must be *conditionally* proclaimed. No one can maintain the former alternative. It follows, then, that what our Lord here commits to His disciples, to His Church, is the right authoritatively to declare, in His name, that there is forgiveness for man's sin, and on what conditions the sin will be forgiven. Nor does there seem to be ground for thinking that we have here a special application by one individual, whether minister or not, to another of the remission (or retention) of sin spoken of. The use of 'any' in the plural number appears to be inconsistent with such a view. It is not a direct address by one person to another that is thought of,—'I declare that *thy* sins are thus authoritatively remitted or retained.' It is a proclamation from one collective body to another,—from the Church to the world. The mission of the Church is to announce to the world her own existence in her Lord, as a company of forgiven men, and to invite the world to join her. Let the world comply with the invitation, it shall enjoy forgiveness in the company of the forgiven: let it refuse the invitation, it can only have its sins retained in the company of those who have been 'judged already' (comp. chap. iii. 18). Here, as in all else, the Church only *witnesses* to what her Lord *does*. But as it is by her *life*, even more than by *words*, that she witnesses, so it is by accepting or rejecting her life that her witness is accepted or rejected; and thus it is that by communion with her the blessing is enjoyed, that by separation from her it is forfeited. It ought particularly to be noticed that of the two remissions or retentions of sin spoken of in the words before us, the Divine act, although the last to be mentioned, is the first in thought—'*have been remitted,*' '*have been retained.*'

## CHAPTER XX. 24-29.

*The Second Manifestation of Himself by the Risen Lord.*

24 **B**UT <sup>a</sup> Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not <sup>a</sup> Chap. xi. 16  
 25 with them when Jesus came. The other disciples there-  
 fore said unto him, <sup>b</sup> We have seen the Lord. But he said <sup>b</sup> Vers. 19, 20.  
 unto them, Except I shall <sup>b</sup> see in his hands the print of  
 the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and  
 26 thrust <sup>1</sup> my hand into his side, I will not believe. And after  
 eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with  
 them: *then* <sup>2</sup> came Jesus, the doors being shut, <sup>3</sup> and stood in  
 27 the midst, and said, Peace *be* unto you. Then saith he to  
 Thomas, <sup>c</sup> Reach hither thy finger, and behold <sup>4</sup> my hands; <sup>c</sup> 1 John i. 1.  
 and reach hither <sup>5</sup> thy hand, and thrust <sup>1</sup> *it* into my side: and  
 28 be not faithless, <sup>6</sup> but believing. And <sup>7</sup> Thomas answered and  
 29 said unto him, My Lord and my God. Jesus saith unto him,  
 Thomas, <sup>8</sup> *d* because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: <sup>d</sup> Comp. Luke  
 blessed <sup>9</sup> *are* they that have not seen, and *yet* have believed. <sup>1</sup> i. 45;  
<sup>2</sup> Cor. v. 7;  
<sup>3</sup> 1 Pet. i. 8.

<sup>1</sup> put<sup>2</sup> omit then<sup>3</sup> Jesus cometh when the doors had been shut<sup>4</sup> see<sup>5</sup> omit hither<sup>6</sup> unbelieving<sup>7</sup> omit And<sup>8</sup> omit Thomas<sup>9</sup> happy

CONTENTS. We have here a second appearance of Jesus to the disciples, distinguished from that coming immediately before, inasmuch as it seems especially intended to set forth the blessedness of those who believe without seeing. Ver. 29 evidently forms the climax of the whole, and presents to us the point of view from which we are to look at this narrative in contrast with the preceding one. How fitting was it that thus, at the moment when the Gospel message was about to be carried into all lands, and when faith in an unseen Saviour was the only faith that could be preached, a special blessing should be pronounced on those who should not see but yet should believe! When we regard the paragraph now before us in this light, a remarkable correspondence presents itself between the three appearances of the Risen Saviour in this chapter and the three parts into which the intercessory prayer of chap. xvii. divides itself. The first appearance corresponds to the first part of the prayer, for in each we see Jesus Himself. The second corresponds to the second part, for in each we see Jesus in relation to His immediate disciples. The third again corresponds to the third part, for in each we see Jesus in relation to all who should yet believe in Him.

Ver. 24. But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. On the object of thus interpreting the name Thomas, see on chap. xi. 16. It is impossible to think that the Evangelist translates the word for the mere purpose of mentioning that Thomas had a Greek as well as an Aramaic name. The man appears in the name.

Ver. 25. The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. Thomas received information from his fellow-apostles of the first manifestation of Himself by Jesus; but he is not satisfied.—But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe. In other words, he will not believe unless he sees. Yet it hardly seems as if the Resurrection of Jesus were the sole object of his incredulity. That is no doubt primarily in view; but we have already seen that the word 'believe' must be understood in a fuller and deeper sense at ver. 8, and the same remark applies to its use in ver. 29. It includes therefore belief in Jesus as the glorified Lord, as the Redeemer who has completely accomplished the purpose of His mission, and in whom the highest hopes of Israel are fulfilled. To Thomas the death upon the cross had appeared to crush these hopes for ever. Could he be convinced of the Resurrection they would revive; and he would believe not merely in that miracle as an isolated fact, but in the whole redeeming work of which it was the culmination and the seal. Thus also we are not to imagine that he is content to waver between conviction and doubt. His old love for his Lord—that love which seems to have burned in the breast of no apostle more warmly than in his—still continues. His mood has been one of disappointment and sorrow; and the sorrow is deepened in exact proportion to the height of his previous expectations, and to what he knows will be the joyful result if he be able to believe the tidings of the Resurrec-

tion. The harsh impression generally made by these words of Thomas is probably in no small measure due to the unfortunate translation 'thrust,' which suggests the thought of coarseness and recklessness of speech. But there is no such meaning in the original. The word is indeed the same as that in the previous clause which the translators of the Authorised Version themselves render by 'put.' What Thomas desires is certainly more than had been granted to the others. Jesus 'showed unto them both His hands and His side' (ver. 20); but Thomas would *touch* them. Had he been present at the first manifestation, he would probably have been satisfied with the evidence that was enough for his fellow-apostles. At all events he is now ready to believe, if only what seems to him sufficient evidence is given; and his desire is granted.

Ver. 26. *And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them.* The place of assembly was without doubt the same as before; and that the apostles were assembled on the Sunday appears to indicate that they already regarded the first day of the week as a day which the Risen Lord would peculiarly bless.—*Jesus cometh when the doors had been shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you.* All is the same as at ver. 19.

Ver. 27. *Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and see my hands; and reach thy hand and put it into my side, and be not unbelieving but believing.* Jesus at once speaks without needing to be told of the doubts of Thomas. At the same time he recognises the naturalness of that element of weakness which marked the faith of His disciple, and He will so meet it that it may give place to strength. As before, under the word 'believing' we must understand not belief in the Resurrection only, but a full faith in Jesus Himself as the Saviour who has triumphed over all His foes, and has completely accomplished the purposes of His love.

Ver. 28. *Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.* He passes at once from the depths of his despondency and hesitation to the most exalted faith. The words are certainly addressed to Jesus; and it is unnecessary to combat the position that they are only an expression of the apostle's thankfulness to God for what he has seen. They are a triumphant confession of his faith, not simply in the Resurrection, but in Him whom he sees before him in all the Divinity both of His Person and of His work. Yet we are not to imagine that only now for the first time did such thoughts enter his mind. They had been long vaguely entertained, long feebly cherished. Nor can we doubt that they had been gaining strength, when they were suddenly dashed by that death upon the cross with which it seemed impossible to reconcile them. Then came the tidings of the Resurrection, even in themselves most startling, but to Thomas (we may well suppose) more startling than to any of the other apostles. Were they true? He saw in an instant how incalculable would be the consequences. It was this very perception of the greatness of the tidings that led him to reject them. His state of mind had been the same as in chap. xi. 16, where, when Jesus hinted at giving life, he went rather to the opposite extreme, and thought of a death that would involve not only Lazarus but them all. Thus also now. He hears that Jesus is risen, and his first impulse is to say,

'It cannot be: thick darkness cannot pass at once into such glorious light; the despair which is justified by what has happened cannot at once be transformed into inextinguishable confidence and hope.' This depth of feeling prepared him for the completeness of the revulsion that now took place. For a week he had been able to meditate on all that he had both seen and heard. We cannot doubt that during that time the sayings of his Lord about His resurrection, as well as His death, would all return to his memory. He would see that what was said to have happened had been foretold; after all it was not to be rejected as impossible. He would think with himself what kind or amount of proof could convince him that the fact was true; and he would be unable to fall upon any harder proof than that which his incredulity had suggested in the moment of its first strength. But, if that proof can be given, then how powerfully would he feel the injustice which by his doubting he had done his Master! With what force would intimations, once dark but now bright in the light of the supposed Resurrection, come home to him! His very highest expectations would seem to him to have been warranted, and more than warranted, by the facts. We need not wonder that, having passed through a week so rich in training power, Thomas, when he did behold the Risen Lord, should have leaped at once from his former unbelief to faith in its highest stage, or that he should have exclaimed to Jesus, 'My Lord and my God.' It may even be doubted if, before this confession was made, he found it necessary to put his finger into the print of the nails or his hand into the wounded side. It was enough to 'see' (ver. 29).

One other remark may be made. Those who study the structure of the Fourth Gospel will hardly fail to trace in the incident thus placed at the close of its narrative the tendency of the Evangelist to return upon his own early steps. He had begun with 'the Word' who 'was God'; he closes with this highest truth accepted and ratified by those to whom the revelation was given. The last witness borne by one of them in the body of the Gospel narrative is, 'My Lord and my God!'

Ver. 29. *Jesus saith unto him, Because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed; happy are they that have not seen and yet have believed.* The words are intended for the Church now about to be called out of the world,—for the Church of all ages, which by the very necessity of the case must believe without seeing. What then is the contrast which Jesus has in view? Can it be a contrast between faith which wishes to *see* the miraculous fact in order to accept it, and faith which accepts the fact on the ground of simple testimony? Such an explanation limits unduly the meaning of the word 'believe.' It substitutes one kind of seeing for another (for what does testimony do but place us in the position of the original witnesses?); and, by failing to bring us into direct contact with the Person of Jesus, it lowers the state of mind to which the blessedness of the Gospel is attached. The contrast is of a deeper kind,—between a faith resting entirely upon outward evidence of Divine claims, and a faith rising higher and resting upon that intuitive perception of the Divine in Jesus which is afforded by the consideration of what He is in Himself as the Crucified and Risen Lord. In the ages of the Church which were to follow the 'going away' of Jesus, it was needful that faith should rest first upon testimony;

but it was not to *pause* there. It was to rest upon the spiritual apprehension of that to which testimony is borne,—of that which the Lord is in Himself as the embodiment of the Divine, and the unchanging spring of the heavenly power and grace which are manifested in His people. Thus to us, who are separated by many centuries from the time when the Lord was personally present in the world, is the blessed assurance given that, though we have not seen Him, we may love Him; and that, though now we see Him not, we may rejoice in Him with

a joy unspeakable and glorified (1 Pet. i. 8). We need not envy Thomas or his fellow-apostles. They were blessed in their faith; we may be even more blessed in ours. The more we penetrate through the outward to the inward, through the flesh to the spirit, through communion with the earthly to communion with the heavenly Lord, the more do we learn to know the fulness that is in Him, in whom 'dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily,' and in whom we are 'complete' (Col. ii. 9, 10).

## CHAPTER XX. 30, 31.

### *Summary of the Gospel.*

30 **A**ND<sup>1</sup> many other signs truly<sup>2</sup> did Jesus in the presence of<sup>3</sup> his<sup>4</sup> disciples, which are not written in this book: But<sup>5</sup> these are written, 'that ye might<sup>6</sup> believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God: and that<sup>7</sup> believing ye might<sup>8</sup> have life<sup>9</sup> through<sup>10</sup> his name.

<sup>1</sup> omit And

<sup>2</sup> therefore

<sup>3</sup> the

<sup>4</sup> may

<sup>5</sup> in

CONTENTS. The life of Jesus has now been traced from His eternal pre-existence as the Logos, through His manifestation of Himself in action and suffering upon earth, to the beginning of His glorification. The Evangelist has thus accomplished the purpose that he had proposed to himself; and he now sums up the particulars of the picture that he has presented, and states the nature of the end that it is designed to serve. It has indeed been urged that the verses before us are the conclusion only of the history of Jesus after His resurrection, and not of the whole history given in the Gospel. It is enough to say that this supposition is refuted by the words 'this book,' and by what we shall find to be the purport of the verses.

Vers. 30, 31. Many other signs therefore did Jesus in the presence of the disciples which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye may have life in his name. Almost every word of this statement is of the utmost importance. 'Many other signs did Jesus:' hence it is only a *selection* that has been given in the book. The writer knows much more of a similar character and fitted to make a similar impression, but he has not deemed it necessary to tell it. What he has related are 'signs,'—not simply miracles of Divine power, but manifestations (now in deed, and now in word) of an inner meaning, illustrating the Divine in Him by whom the deeds are performed or the words spoken. 'In the presence of His disciples:' why not in the presence of the world? Had they not been done in public as well as in private, before enemies as well as friends? They had: but it is not upon them as signs which ought to have convinced the unbelieving that the Evangelist has chiefly dwelt. As he recalled them, he once more beheld Jesus

in the midst of the little band of His disciples, making manifest His *glory* to them alone; while they apprehended that glory, forgetful of everything but itself, and the feelings of admiration, wonder, delight, and love which it awakened in their hearts. They thought not of the world at the time; they saw only that all was done for them. So now in the vividness of John's recollection every 'sign' appears exactly as at the moment when it was wrought, full of meaning to disciples; to others,—nay, it is not necessary to mention them at all (comp. chap. xvii. 9; 1 John v. 16). 'But these are written:' that is, these 'signs' are written. The Gospel then is a record of 'signs,' and whatever else it contains must be regarded as subordinate to them. 'That ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God:'—words by which we are not to understand that the signs have been written in order that unbelieving readers may be led to acknowledge the claims of Jesus. The word 'believe' is not used in the sense of being brought to faith, as if those addressed had not had faith before. They are already believers, disciples, friends. What has been aimed at is not the first formation but the *deepening* of faith within them (such as that of which we read in chap. ii. 11, where we are told that His disciples 'believed' in Him), by which they are led into a truer knowledge of their Lord, as well as into a more intimate communion with Him and, in Him, with the Father. To make his readers rest in faith, so that faith shall not be a mere conclusion of the intellect, but the element and spirit of their lives, is what the writer has proposed to himself. 'And that, believing, ye may have life:' not, that, being brought to faith through the record which he gives, they may obtain life in Jesus; but that, as already believing,—*in Him* as the branch is in

<sup>a</sup> Chap. xxi.

<sup>25</sup>

<sup>b</sup> Comp. Luke

i. 4.

<sup>c</sup> Chap. xix.

<sup>35</sup>

<sup>d</sup> See chap. iii.

<sup>15, 16.</sup>

<sup>e</sup> Comp. chaps.

i. 12, xvi. 23.

the vine,—they may in Him enjoy that spiritual and eternal life which He possesses, and which He makes ever more and more largely the portion of His people, as their faith in Him deepens, and their fellowship with Him increases. Finally, 'in His name:' not merely naming His name or confessing Him before men,—but in His *Name*, in Himself as revealed, made known as what He is,—the revelation of the Father, and possessed of all the glorious qualities belonging to the Son.

Such is the meaning of these words when they are looked at in the light of those rules of inter-

pretation which are supplied by the Gospel; and, with this meaning, they set before us in the most definite manner the writer's own conception of the task which he had undertaken. They refer obviously, too, to the Gospel as a whole, and not to any single section. At this point, then, the narrative of the Fourth Gospel closes, having exhibited to us that 'life' which was in 'the Word' (chap. i. 4), and having so set that Word before us that believers, dwelling upon His manifested glory, may be brought to a deeper knowledge of what He is, and to more and fuller life in Him.

## CHAPTER XXI. 1-14.

### *Miraculous Draught of Fishes—The Meal on the Shore of the Sea of Galilee.*

- 1 AFTER these things Jesus showed<sup>1</sup> himself again to the disciples at <sup>a</sup>the sea of Tiberias; and on this wise <sup>a</sup>Chap. vi. 1.
- 2 showed he *himself*.<sup>2</sup> There were together Simon Peter, and <sup>b</sup>Thomas called Didymus, and <sup>c</sup>Nathanael of <sup>d</sup>Cana in <sup>e</sup>Galilee, and <sup>f</sup>the sons of Zebedee, and two other of his disciples. <sup>b</sup>Chap. xi. 16. <sup>c</sup>Chap. i. 45. <sup>d</sup>Chap. ii. 1. <sup>e</sup>Matt. iv. 22.
- 3 Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing. They say unto him, We also go <sup>g</sup>with thee. They went forth, and entered into a ship <sup>h</sup>immediately; <sup>i</sup>and <sup>j</sup>that night they caught <sup>k</sup>nothing. <sup>j</sup>Luke v. 5.
- 4 But when the morning was now come,<sup>4</sup> Jesus stood on the shore: but <sup>l</sup>the disciples<sup>10</sup> knew <sup>m</sup>not that it was Jesus. <sup>l</sup>Chap. xx. 14.
- 5 <sup>n</sup>Then<sup>11</sup> Jesus<sup>12</sup> saith unto them, Children, have ye any <sup>n</sup>Comp. Luke xxiv. 41.
- 6 meat?<sup>13</sup> They answered him, No. And he said unto them, <sup>o</sup>Cast the net on the right side of the ship,<sup>5</sup> and ye shall find. <sup>o</sup>Luke v. 4, 6, 7.
- 7 They cast therefore, and now they were not able<sup>14</sup> to draw it for the multitude of fishes. Therefore <sup>p</sup>that disciple<sup>15</sup> whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord. Now<sup>16</sup> when Simon<sup>17</sup> Peter heard that it was the Lord, he <sup>q</sup>girt *his* fisher's<sup>18</sup> <sup>q</sup>Ver. 18.
- coat <sup>r</sup>unto<sup>19</sup> *him*, (for he was naked), and did <sup>r</sup>cast himself into <sup>r</sup>Matt. xiv. 29.
- 8 the sea. And<sup>20</sup> the other disciples came in a little ship; <sup>s</sup>for they were not far from land, but as it were two hundred <sup>s</sup>Ver. 18.
- 9 cubits,<sup>21</sup>) dragging the net with<sup>22</sup> fishes. As soon then as they were come to land,<sup>24</sup> they saw<sup>25</sup> a <sup>t</sup>fire of coals there,<sup>26</sup> and <sup>t</sup>Chap. xviii. 18.
- 10 <sup>u</sup>fish laid thereon, and <sup>u</sup>bread.<sup>27</sup> Jesus saith unto them, Bring <sup>u</sup>Chap. vi. 9.
- 11 of the fish<sup>28</sup> which ye have now caught.<sup>7</sup> Simon Peter<sup>29</sup> went

- |  |   |  |                     |
|--|---|--|---------------------|
| <sup>1</sup> manifested                                | <sup>2</sup> and he manifested himself thus         | <sup>3</sup> of                        | <sup>4</sup> come   |
| <sup>5</sup> the boat                                  | <sup>6</sup> omit immediately                       | <sup>7</sup> laid hold on              |                     |
| <sup>8</sup> But when morning was now coming           | <sup>9</sup> omit but                               | <sup>10</sup> add however              |                     |
| <sup>11</sup> omit then                                | <sup>12</sup> add therefore                         | <sup>13</sup> have ye anything to eat? |                     |
| <sup>14</sup> and no longer had they strength          | <sup>15</sup> That disciple therefore               |  |                     |
| <sup>16</sup> omit Now                                 | <sup>17</sup> add therefore, even                   | <sup>18</sup> omit fisher's            | <sup>19</sup> about |
| <sup>20</sup> But                                      | <sup>21</sup> the little boat                       | <sup>22</sup> add off                  | <sup>23</sup> of    |
| <sup>24</sup> When therefore they came out on the land |   |  | <sup>25</sup> see   |
| <sup>26</sup> a fire of charcoal placed there          | <sup>27</sup> and a fish placed thereon, and a loaf |  |                     |
| <sup>28</sup> fishes                                   | <sup>29</sup> add therefore                         |  |                     |



up, and drew the net to <sup>30</sup> land full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty and three: and for all there were so many, yet was  
 12 not the net broken.<sup>31</sup> Jesus saith unto them, <sup>32</sup> Come *and* dine.<sup>33</sup> <sup>34</sup> And <sup>35</sup> none of the disciples durst ask <sup>36</sup> him, Who art thou? <sup>37</sup> And <sup>38</sup> knowing that it was the Lord. Jesus then <sup>39</sup> cometh, and  
 14 <sup>40</sup> taketh bread,<sup>41</sup> and giveth them, and fish <sup>42</sup> likewise. This is <sup>43</sup> now <sup>44</sup> the <sup>45</sup> third time that Jesus showed himself to his <sup>46</sup> disciples, after that he was risen <sup>47</sup> from the dead.

<sup>30</sup> add the<sup>34</sup> make inquiry of<sup>38</sup> a<sup>31</sup> rent<sup>35</sup> omit then<sup>39</sup> was manifested to the<sup>33</sup> breakfast<sup>36</sup> the loaf<sup>38</sup> omit And<sup>37</sup> the fish<sup>40</sup> raised<sup>32</sup> Act. x. 41.<sup>34</sup> Comp. chap. iv. 27.<sup>35</sup> Comp. Matt. xxvi. 26; chap. vi. 11. <sup>36</sup> Chap. xx. 29, 26.

CONTENTS. The authenticity and genuineness of the chapter upon which we now enter have been keenly contested; while many, who admit that John is the author of the chapter, see in it not so much an organic part of his original work as a section added at a later date, but before the Gospel had passed beyond the first circle of its readers. The main arguments brought by the defenders of both these views are, (1) That in chap. xx. 30, 31, we have what is obviously the close of the Gospel; and (2) That certain expressions of this chapter, particularly those of vers. 24, 25, are inconsistent with the idea of a Johannine authorship. In a commentary such as this we cannot discuss the subject at any length, or avail ourselves of considerations which the English reader can hardly be expected to appreciate. A very few words, therefore, upon the two points above mentioned must suffice.

As to the first of these hypotheses, that chap. xxi. was not written by John, we need not say more than that it is opposed to all the evidence possessed by us, whether external or internal. Its defenders, therefore, have been few in number as compared with those who have accepted the chapter as genuine. With the latter we agree, entertaining no doubt that the first twenty-three verses at all events are from the hand of the Apostle: of vers. 24 and 25 we shall speak when we reach them.

It is more difficult to say whether the chapter is a constituent part of the original plan, or an Appendix added after the Gospel had been finished, and when a longer or shorter period of time had passed. The question is one that must be determined mainly by taking the contents of the chapter into account. When this is done, there seems little reason to doubt that we have here an Epilogue corresponding to the Prologue, and—not less than the latter—properly belonging to the organic structure of the Gospel as a whole. Let us look for a moment at the particular idea which the chapter unfolds. That idea is not merely fresh illustration of the glory of the Redeemer's post-resurrection life. Were it no more than this, we should at once allow that the chapter is at best an Appendix to the Gospel. It would be impossible to think that, after having written the words of chap. xx. 30, 31, the Evangelist should *immediately* pass to another illustration of the same thought. No doubt the idea of which we speak is involved in the first narrative of the chapter, which is distinctly stated to be a 'third' manifestation of Himself by the Risen Lord (ver.

14), and is thus placed, in one respect at least, on the same line as the two preceding manifestations of chap. xx. Yet an attentive consideration of that narrative will show that the great truth which the Evangelist beholds in it is, the joy provided by Jesus for His disciples in connection with the work which they accomplish for the conversion of the world,—that the dominating thought which it presents to him is not merely the glory of the Risen Lord, but the glory of Christian work as it is performed through Him, and its fruits are enjoyed with Him. If this be the idea of the first part of the chapter, we shall find, when we come to the commentary, that its second and third parts, relating to the two Apostles Peter and John, are much more than simple narratives of facts. They lead the thoughts to apostolic work and Christian action, and to waiting for the Second Coming of the Lord. Three leading thoughts are thus presented to us in the chapter, which may be thus described:—(1) The mutual joy of the Risen Lord and His disciples in the successful accomplishment of Christ's work, vers. 1-14; (2) The work of Apostolic and Christian witnessing between the Resurrection of Jesus and His Second Coming, vers. 16-19; (3) The Second Coming itself, vers. 20-23. If now we compare these three thoughts with the leading thoughts of the Prologue, the correspondence will appear close and remarkable. In the Prologue, as well as here, three main topics are dwelt upon: (1) The Word with God, the Son with the Father, in His general manifestations before His Incarnation, vers. 1-5; (2) The witnessing to Him who was to come, which culminated in John, the representative of Old Testament witness, vers. 6-13; The coming of Jesus into the world, vers. 14-18. In other words, we have in the opening and closing parts of the Fourth Gospel—

#### I. THE PROLOGUE WITH ITS THREE THOUGHTS.

1. The Light to be witnessed to, as it appears in its inner fulness and power. 2. The preparation by witness for that Light. 3. The coming of the Light.

#### II. THE EPILOGUE WITH ITS THREE THOUGHTS.

1. The Redeemer who is to be witnessed to, as He appears in the joy of successful and accomplished work. 2. The preparation of the world for that joy by the work of witnessing. 3. The Second Coming.

The detailed exposition of these thoughts will

appear in the commentary. In the meantime we have said enough to justify our regarding chap. xxi. as an Epilogue, as an integral part of the organism of the Gospel as we have it,—its Seventh and last great section.

This intimate connection of the chapter with the general plan of the Gospel is the point of real importance, and it is on this that we would lay stress. Whether the Epilogue formed part of the Gospel *from the very first*, or was added by the apostle at a later date, is a subordinate question, and one to which different answers will naturally be given. There are peculiarities of language and of structure which seem decidedly to favour the latter supposition. On the other hand, we should certainly expect that, if the Gospel was ever circulated in two forms (with and without the Appendix), the last chapter would be absent from some of our ancient manuscripts, or would at all events be occasionally found separated from the rest. It is possible, indeed, that the Gospel might in its shorter form be confined to a very limited circle of Christians, and be published for general use only when complete. In this form the Appendix theory may perhaps be said to meet the conditions of the case.—The whole structure of the narrative upon which we now enter shows that, to the eye of the Evangelist, it is not only *history* but *parable*. As, therefore, it is with a mind alive to the spiritual meaning of the scene that John describes what actually happened, special significance may be looked for in the expressions which he employs.

Ver. 1. *After these things Jesus manifested himself again to the disciples at the sea of Tiberias, and he manifested himself thus.* The words 'after these things' are indefinite, and throw no light upon the length of the interval that elapsed between the last and the present appearance of Jesus. The point to which the Evangelist calls attention is that we have here another 'manifestation' of Himself by the Risen Saviour, similar to the two mentioned in the previous chapter (comp. chap. xxi. 14). What we have before us, therefore, is not merely the fact that Jesus showed Himself to the disciples, but that He exhibited Himself in a glory which the natural eye could not have discerned (see chap. ii. 11). It was 'at the sea of Tiberias,' that is, the sea of Galilee, that the manifestation took place. The earlier Evangelists do not relate it, but they give the message of our Lord to His disciples instructing them to go into Galilee, for there they should see Him (Matt. xxviii. 10, 16; Mark xvi. 7). John does not tell us of the message, but he relates the meeting. Surely such notices on the part of different historians are supplementary, not discordant.

Ver. 2. *There were together Simon Peter, and Thomas called Didymus, and Nathanael of Cana of Galilee, and the sons of Zebedee, and two other of his disciples.* It is doubtful whether the seven persons here referred to are arranged, as is often supposed, in two groups, one consisting of three, and the other of four members. There may be significance in the mention of Thomas as now (after chap. xx.) completely at one with his brother Apostles, and in the fact that Nathanael (comp. chap. i. 51) is associated with the miracle.

Ver. 3. *Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing. They say unto him, We also come with thee. They went forth and entered into the*

*boat, and that night they laid hold on nothing.* It is hardly probable that in this the disciples thought of anything but the supply of their temporal wants. To John, however, there is more in their act than this. His word 'went forth' leads us at once to feel that he sees in their going the Providential guidance of God (comp. notes on chap. xviii. 1, 4). It is not an ordinary event: it will illustrate that Divine scheme for the salvation of men which was accomplished through Him who 'came forth' from God. Moreover, just as once before Peter and some of his companions had been called from the work of fishing to the first stage of their apostolate (Luke v. 1-11), so shall he and those with him be called from a similar scene to that higher stage upon which they are now to enter. In Peter's being the first to make the proposal, we can hardly fail to see the elements of that character which gave him the prominence he afterwards had in the Church of the Redeemer. He is the moving spring of the whole apostolic band; he proposes, and the others say, 'We also come with thee.' Yet writers can be found to urge that one great object of the Fourth Gospel is to depreciate Peter in comparison with John, one of this very company! The seven go forth by 'night' (the usual time for fishing), but they caught nothing. There is no reason to think that the season was unfavourable; but they were not successful.—The word used for 'catch' is worthy of notice. It means to lay hold on, and it does not seem to be elsewhere used in the sense of catching fish.

Ver. 4. *But when morning was now coming, Jesus stood on the shore; the disciples however knew not that it was Jesus.* Night passed away, and the day began to break. Then Jesus stood on the shore, but they did not recognise Him,—it may be that the light was insufficient, it may be that it was not yet His wish that He should be known.

Ver. 5. *Jesus therefore saith unto them, Children, have ye anything to eat? They answered him, No.* It is hardly possible to imagine that the word 'children' is here used because Jesus is addressing Himself as 'a master to his workmen,' or because He is speaking with the dignity of a superior. It is a word of tenderness and affection. At the same time it may perhaps have a deeper meaning, for the word 'brethren' of chap. xx. 17, which now expresses the relation of Jesus to His disciples, rather leads directly to the supposition that, in a certain sense, He speaks as One standing on a footing of equality with themselves. There is at least a striking coincidence between the word ('children') here used and that used in Heb. ii. 13 (Isa. viii. 18). He who speaks is engaged in the same occasion, takes the same position, is called to the same work as they. The question which He asks is important, especially the word which is rendered in the Authorised Version 'meat,' but which we have rendered by 'to eat.' For thus we observe the true point of the question,—not, 'Have you caught fish?' but, 'Have you fish to eat?' The term, however, was commonly used of fish. Here it seems to refer to provision of fish taken by them for eating when they started. It ought to be carefully noted also that, as is shown by the particular form of the question, it is the *meal* that is before the mind of Jesus: only when we see this do we gain the true point of view from which to contem-

plate the whole narrative. To the question of Jesus the disciples answer, 'No.' They thus acknowledge the fruitlessness of their labours, and their need of further light and guidance.

Ver. 6. **And he said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and no longer had they strength to draw it for the multitude of fishes.** Comp. Luke v. 6.

Ver. 7. **That disciple therefore whom Jesus loved saith unto Peter, It is the Lord. When Simon therefore, even Peter, heard that it was the Lord, he girt his coat about him (for he was naked) and did cast himself into the sea.** That the incident thus related of each of the two apostles is in closest harmony with everything else that we know of them strikes every reader. It need only be further noticed that John himself gives us a token of his desire that we should see in the action of Peter an illustration of that character which appeared in his whole subsequent career. He does not call him simply Simon Peter; but, as in chap. xviii. 10, he interposes a word between the two names,— 'Simon, therefore, Peter.' As soon as Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his coat about him, 'for he was naked.' There is no reason to think that the nakedness thus spoken of was absolute. The use of the term is consistent (in Greek as in the language of common life in Scotland to this day) with partial clothing. The girding is probably not to pass unnoticed. It was thus that at chap. xiii. 4, 5, our Lord prepared Himself for service: His apostle, when preparing for the active service of his Master, must do the same.

Ver. 8. **But the other disciples came in the little boat (for they were not far from land, but as it were two hundred cubits off) dragging the net of fishes. While Peter takes the lead, impetuously dashing into the water (comp. Matt. xiv. 29), his fellow-disciples reach land more slowly. Yet they do not actually land the net: they only drag it to the shore. The landing is reserved for him who had displayed greatest earnestness and activity. All now proceeds directly towards the culminating point of the narrative,—the meal.**

Ver. 9. **When therefore they came out on the land, they see a fire of charcoal placed there, and a fish placed thereon, and a loaf.** No intimation is given where the fire of charcoal had been obtained, or how it had been brought there. The thoughts of the Evangelist are so entirely occupied with the meal, that it is a matter of no consequence to him to give explanations upon such points. Upon one fact he desires us to fix our attention—the meal is provided by Jesus, whether miraculously or in some ordinary way he does not ask. It is impossible not to notice the words 'a fish' and 'a loaf,' not 'fish' and 'bread:' the contrast with 'the fishes' of ver. 10 is obviously designed.

Ver. 10. **Jesus saith unto them, Bring of the fishes which ye have now laid hold on. The meal, therefore, consists of materials provided by the combined action of Jesus and His disciples.**

Ver. 11. **Simon Peter therefore went up, and drew the net to the land full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty and three; and for all there were so many, yet was not the net rent.** Again Peter appears in all the prominence of his character and work,—the leader of the apostolic

company. The fishes drawn to shore by means of the net were 'great:' yet neither by their size nor by their number was the net rent. No fish was lost. (See further below.)

The comparison of this miracle with that of the draught of fishes in Luke v. 4-7 supplies various points of contrast, at once bringing out and confirming what we have yet to speak of as the inner meaning of the section before us. Of these the most interesting are that the fishes are all great and good, and numbered; in the earlier narrative we have no such statements. In the earlier, too, the net was breaking: here 'the net was not rent.' The contrasts all point to the difference between a ministry of trial with a suffering Lord, and a ministry of triumph with a glorified Lord.

Ver. 12. **Jesus saith unto them, Come and breakfast.** The bringing of the fish from the net to the fire is not recorded. The Evangelist hastens to the chief point in his narrative. Jesus gives the invitation to the meal, and it is accepted.—None of the disciples durst make inquiry of him, Who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord. Awe and reverence prevented their asking Jesus who He was (comp. chap. iv. 27). They did what they were told.

Ver. 13. **Jesus cometh and taketh the loaf, and giveth them, and the fish likewise.** We might have expected to read of the 'fishes' rather than the 'fish,' for the meal prepared must have included a portion of the 'fishes' of ver. 10 as well as the 'fish' of ver. 9. Yet such is the importance which the Evangelist attaches to the latter that he speaks of it alone, and makes no farther allusion to the rest.

Ver. 14. **This is now a third time that Jesus was manifested to the disciples, after that he was raised from the dead.** It is the third 'manifestation,' although the fourth appearance, of the Risen Lord that has been described. The appearance to Mary Magdalene at chap. xx. 16 is not counted, either because it only embodied the preparatory message as to the state in which Jesus was, or because it was made, not (like the three following) to companies of apostles and disciples, but only to one single disciple. That the present manifestation is stated to be the third does not exclude the other appearances of the Risen Saviour recorded by the earlier Evangelists. It is simply the third in John's own enumeration, the third in that selection of the different manifestations which he had thought it desirable to make. The repetition of the word 'manifested' (comp. ver. 1) is to be noticed as showing that the word is intentionally used. It expresses more than that Jesus showed Himself after His Resurrection. In these manifestations He really revealed Himself out of the entirely new state which had begun at the Resurrection. Just as when 'manifested in the flesh' He was different from what He had been before, and revealed His glory in the garb of weak and suffering humanity, so in His manifestation of Himself at this time He was different from what He had been when clothed with the lowliness which He had assumed for a season. That lowliness has been laid aside: He is still the Man Christ Jesus, but glorified. We see Him now under a new aspect, and at a new point in His history. This consideration will help us to understand the connection of the next two paragraphs of the chapter, and their place in the organism of the Gospel.

Before passing on, however, it is necessary to say a few words upon the inner meaning of this miracle, upon the light in which our Lord Himself intended it to be looked at, and in which it is presented by the Evangelist. Referring our readers to the general remarks made on chap. ii. 11, we observe that here, as there, the miracle must be viewed not only historically but symbolically. The facts are historical, but they have at the same time much more than simple historical force. They are so arranged and grouped by Him who taught by action as well as word, that they bring out one of the great lessons of His kingdom. Nor can we have any doubt in the present instance what that lesson is. We have before us a picture of the wonderful success which was to follow the apostles when, in the strength of their Risen Lord, they went forth to preach salvation to the whole world; as well as a picture of the joy which they shall share with Him, when in this success both He and they 'shall see of the travail of' their 'soul, and shall be satisfied.' Around these thoughts it will be found that all the particulars of the miracle, in their deeper meaning, easily arrange themselves:—the helplessness of these 'fishers of men' when they are without their Lord, their triumphant success whenever they listen to His voice, the

invitation given them to come and share in that meal which He has prepared, and whose sacramental character is so strikingly brought out by the mention of the 'fish' and the 'loaf.' Every particular of the scene is full of spiritual meaning; and, even where we may not be able to satisfy ourselves that we have discovered the meaning, we know that it is there, and can rest in the hope that it will by and by be perceived. Perhaps the most difficult point to interpret in this way is the number of the fishes as given in ver. 11. Of that number we shall say little. It will be hard for students of this Gospel not to believe that it too has a deeper meaning than that of simple numbers. What that meaning is there is little difficulty in determining. The whole course of the narrative shows that 153 represents the fulness of the Church, the complete gathering in of all her members, the net not rent, not one believer lost. It is much more difficult to say whence the number 153 is obtained. Many suggestions have been made, but we shall not discuss them. Not one of them can be said to have as yet gained anything like general acceptance. Until a more satisfactory result is reached, it is better to rest satisfied with the general meaning, of which we have already spoken, and as to which no doubt can be entertained.

## CHAPTER XXI. 15-19.

*The Restoration of Peter and the Re-institution of Christian Witnessing.*

- 15 **S**O when<sup>1</sup> they had dined,<sup>2</sup> Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, *son* of Jonas,<sup>3</sup> lovest thou me <sup>a</sup> more than these? <sup>a</sup> Chap. i. 42.  
He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. <sup>b</sup> Comp. Matt. xxvi. 33.
- 16 He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. He saith to him again the <sup>c</sup> second time, Simon, *son* of Jonas,<sup>3</sup> lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He
- 17 saith unto him, 'Feed <sup>d</sup> my sheep. He saith unto him <sup>e</sup> the third time, Simon, *son* of Jonas,<sup>3</sup> lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou <sup>f</sup> knowest all things; thou knowest <sup>g</sup> that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed
- 18 my sheep. <sup>h</sup> Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young,<sup>7</sup> thou <sup>i</sup> girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry <sup>j</sup> thee whither
- 19 thou wouldest not. This <sup>k</sup> spake <sup>l</sup> he, signifying <sup>m</sup> by what <sup>n</sup> death he should <sup>o</sup> glorify God. And when he had spoken <sup>p</sup> this, he saith unto him, <sup>q</sup> Follow me.

<sup>1</sup> When therefore  
<sup>5</sup> Be shepherd of  
<sup>6</sup> But this

<sup>2</sup> breakfasted  
<sup>6</sup> seest  
<sup>10</sup> said

<sup>3</sup> John  
<sup>7</sup> younger  
<sup>11</sup> add manner of

<sup>4</sup> a  
<sup>8</sup> bring

<sup>a</sup> Chap. xiii. 36.  
<sup>b</sup> Ver. 7.  
<sup>c</sup> Comp. chap. xii. 33;  
<sup>d</sup> 2 Pet. i. 14.  
<sup>e</sup> Comp. chap. xii. 27, 28;  
<sup>f</sup> Acts v. 41;  
<sup>g</sup> Phil. i. 30;  
<sup>h</sup> 1 Pet. iv. 11, 16.  
<sup>i</sup> Ver. 32;  
<sup>j</sup> chap. viii. 18.

**CONTENTS.** Before speaking of the contents of this paragraph it is necessary to make an effort to discover its place in the organism of the chapter. So far as we have seen, no successful effort has yet been made to accomplish this. The usual explanation is, that before finally departing Jesus desired to throw light upon the history and fate of the two leading apostles, Peter and John. Such an explanation is unsatisfactory. Apart from the fact that it is not the manner of John to claim for himself so prominent a position as is thus implied, it is sufficient to observe that, if such be the object, it is not attained. Light, indeed, is cast on the future history of Peter, but none on that of John, which is rather left in a mysterious vagueness, perplexing instead of instructive to the mind. Others, again, pronounce any effort to discover the connection hopeless, unless we regard ver. 14 as a parenthesis; which cannot be done. In proceeding to the explanation which we shall venture to propose, we simply ask our readers to weigh it calmly, and not to reject it because at first sight it may seem to them improbable.

We have already endeavoured to show that chap. xxi. is an Epilogue to the narrative part of the Gospel, and that it has a general correspondence with the Prologue. But if a correspondence exists as to the whole, it is not unnatural to think that it may also be traced in the several parts. This is rendered still more probable by the circumstance that the parts of each are unquestionably three in number; and that, while the one deals with the pre-existent Logos, and the eternity preceding His Incarnation, the other deals with the Logos after His Resurrection, and the Second Coming.

In this latter respect the correspondence between chap. i. 1-5 and chap. xxi. 1-14 is, as we have seen, exceedingly close. But at chap. i. 6 there is a sudden and unexpected transition to John the Baptist and the witness which he bore to the eternal 'Light,' until the Light itself shone forth and needed such witness no more. In precisely the same manner, then, we have here a sudden and unexpected transition to the apostle Peter, and the witness borne by him to the Incarnate Word, until Jesus shall come the second time, and shall need no more to be proclaimed to men.

Such is the general idea which we offer for consideration as to the connection between the first two paragraphs of the present chapter; and when we come to speak of the contents of the next paragraph this idea will receive much confirmation. In the meantime we pass on to observe that if the correctness of the thought be allowed, it cannot fail to exercise in another respect a powerful influence upon our general apprehension of the meaning of the passage before us. For, as the Baptist at chap. i. 6 is to be regarded as more than an individual,—as representative of the whole Old Testament witness to Jesus,—so with Peter here. He is representative of all Christian witness to Jesus; and the paragraph deals with more than his re-installation into the apostolic office. It is a re-institution, now made by Jesus in His new estate, of the whole duty of Christian witnessing. Jesus has shown that the banquet which in His state of glory He prepares for His disciples is one consisting of the fruits of successful work in His cause; and now, in the person of Peter, His disciples receive from Him their commission for the work in which they are to bear witness to

Him,—a work which can only rest on, and be carried out through, love to Himself.

Ver. 15. *When therefore they had breakfasted, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of John, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee.* The question ('lovest thou') contains the second of the two Greek verbs for loving, of which we have already spoken at chap. v. 20. This verb is less expressive of emotions of tenderness, of personal feeling and affection, than that verb used by Peter in his reply. The words 'more than these' in our Lord's question can hardly spring from anything else than the remembrance of the apostle's hasty assertion before his denial of his Master, 'Though all men shall be offended because of Thee, yet will I never be offended.' They were thus especially designed to expose to Peter's view the pride and self-sufficiency by which his fall had been hastened; and that they effected this object we may infer from the absence of these words in his reply. He will make no mention of others now: one step in his education has been gained. Not only so; it is to be further noticed that the apostle does not use the same word for 'love' as had been employed by Jesus. He uses one that speaks of a more familiar and friendly affection, implying less depth of serious thought. The change may be connected with his recollection of his fall; but it is to be mainly traced to the genuine sincerity, the real warmth, of his love for Jesus. Jesus accepts the declaration of his love and recognises its genuineness, hence the charge now given to the apostle.—*He saith unto him, Feed my lambs.* This charge will be more fully noticed when we have dealt with the exposition of the following verses.

Ver. 16. *He saith to him again a second time, Simon, son of John, lovest thou me?* The same verb ('lovest') which had been used by our Lord in His first question again occurs here, and the question only differs from the first in the gracious omission of the words 'more than these.' Jesus had appreciated the motive which had led Peter in his previous reply to avoid all comparison between his own love to Jesus and that of others. He accepts the evidence of humility afforded by His apostle, and in that direction at least will no longer test him.—*He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee.* Peter's reply is in exactly the same terms as before; the word 'I love' being that which he had previously used, and not that used by Jesus.—*He saith unto him, Be shepherd of my sheep.* See on next verse.

Ver. 17. *He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of John, lovest thou me?* In this third question, apparently a repetition of the first and second, one word ('lovest') is changed: for the word which he had used before, Jesus substitutes that less elevated, more familiar word with which Peter had already twice replied, 'I love Thee.' It is this that constitutes to the apostle the painful force of the third question. Not only is his own word taken up by Jesus, but that word is one by which he had sought to give utterance to the strength of his affection. And now Jesus says to him, 'Peter, dost thou really thus love Me as thou sayest? But a little while ago, what was thy denial of thy Friend? Is it otherwise now? I will take thee at thine own word. May I trust thee that, with that love to

which thou speakest, thou lovest Me?'—Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, *Lovest thou me?* And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou seest that I love thee. Peter's grief is at once intelligible,—not simply because he had been three times questioned as to his love, but because the third time his own statement, twice made, had been taken up, and he had been asked to consider well whether it was really true, whether he might not be again misjudging himself. But he was not merely grieved, he was also disciplined; his grief was wholesome. Up to this point there seems to have been some faint trace of self in his replies: at all events he had stood before his Lord as if his Lord were peculiarly reading him: he had not wholly forgotten himself. Now, however, all his past weakness and sin rise to his view: can he who has been so guilty have any special value? Surely not: if he is known, he is known only as one of 'all things;' with such emptiness of self he will cast himself upon his Lord, and only say, 'Lord, Thou knowest all things; Thou seest that I love Thee.' The victory of grace is complete, and he receives his final charge.—Jesus saith unto him, *Feed my sheep.*

We have still to say a word or two of the three-fold charge which is given in the words, 'Feed my lambs,' 'Be shepherd of my sheep,' 'Feed my sheep.' It is a little doubtful whether we ought to understand by the 'lambs' the younger members of the Christian community, or the whole flock in its weakest and most elementary stage of Christian growth: the contrast with 'sheep' leads upon the whole to the former view. The charge to the apostle is 'Feed' these lambs: not less than the older members of the flock do they require the shepherd's most thoughtful as well as his most tender care. After this we have 'sheep' twice mentioned (for a slight difference of reading found in some ancient manuscripts does not materially affect the meaning), and the only point we have to consider is the difference between 'Be shepherd of' and 'Feed.' The structural principles of the Gospel at once tell that there is a climax; and that climax seems to correspond to the gradation exemplified by a pastor as he himself grows in knowledge and experience. At first he is eager to perform all offices for his flock, thinking all equally important; perhaps even most pleased with the rule that has been assigned to him, and in which his own importance most appears. But soon, if he has the spirit of a real shepherd, he learns that to bear rule is comparatively a small thing, and that to 'feed' the flock of God, to nourish it on pastures ever fresh, and with waters ever living, is at once his most difficult and his noblest task.

Peter is now ready to hear what, in tending his Master's flock, he is to do and suffice.

Ver. 18. Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast younger, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest; but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and bring thee whither thou wouldest not. Our readers may call to mind, before we proceed to the further examination of this verse, that 'girding' was the preliminary to crucifixion. The words, 'verily, verily,' with which the verse begins, mark, as always, the importance and solemnity of the declaration made, and thus prepare us

to think that we have more in them than a simple announcement of the death which the apostle was to die. Again, the use of the word 'girded'—although not the compound of ver. 7, but the simple verb—reminds us so much of the action of this latter verse, where the metaphorical meaning is obviously prominent in the writer's mind, as to lead here also to the thought of metaphor. Again, the use of the word 'walkedst' (comp. chaps. vi. 66, viii. 12, xi. 9, 10, xii. 35), which in its literal signification is not well adapted to express the free activity of youth, suggests a figurative interpretation of the passage. Once more, the mention of the stretching out of the hands before the carrying away is spoken of, is fatal to a merely literal meaning; for such stretching out of the hands cannot be looked on as a necessary preliminary to girding, whereas it would be a natural action on the part of those who willingly submitted to their fate, and who were desirous to help rather than hinder officials in the discharge of their duty. We seem, therefore, compelled to adopt a metaphorical interpretation of the words. When we do so all difficulties disappear.

The allusion to the time when Peter girded himself and walked whither he would, becomes the expression of that self-will by which, before his present entire consecration to the service of Jesus, he had been marked. Now, however, his self-will shall be crucified; the old nature which sought only its own gratification shall be as completely powerless as is the body of one nailed to a cross; he will be so truly a partaker of the sufferings of Christ as to find in this fellowship with his dying Lord the very *ground and beginning* of his apostolic activity. Then he will 'stretch out his hands,' will assume the attitude of one who is giving himself up to another's guidance, and will resign himself entirely to the disposal of that 'other,' to whose will his own has been subdued. Then, too, 'another' will gird him,—that is, will gird him in the sense in which the word has just been used, will equip him for his task. Finally, another will 'bring' (not carry) 'him whither he would not;' will lead him in paths that he would not himself have chosen,—will guide him to fields of activity in which he shall joyfully submit himself to Him who immediately adds, 'Follow Me.' The question may be asked, Who then is the 'other' spoken of? The only answer seems to be that it is the 'other' of chap. v. 32,—that is, God (comp. also chap. iv. 38).

Ver. 19. But this said he, signifying by what manner of death he should glorify God. It is impossible to deny that in these words the Evangelist refers to 'death' in the ordinary sense of the term. If, then, we consider (1) the peculiar expressions used in the last verse; (2) the tradition of the Church (usually regarded as worthy of trust), that Peter died by crucifixion; and (3) the fact that, at the time when the words were written, Peter's death must have been long past: it is at once to be admitted that the Evangelist applies ver. 18, in the first instance at least, to the actual crucifixion of Peter. But it is not necessary to suppose that *all* the clauses of the verse refer to the literal crucifixion, or that the meaning of any of them is exhausted by that fact (comp. chap. xii. 32, 33). The singular words, 'he should glorify God,' confirm the interpretation we have given. There is no evidence that at this early

stage of Christian history this expression was used for martyrdom. It cannot therefore be explained in the light of martyrdom alone. We must compare such passages as chaps. xii. 28, xiii. 31, xiv. 13, xv. 8, xvii. 1, 4; and, doing so, we learn that the death of Peter is not viewed simply as the closing act of his career, but as an act in which that second life of his which had been spoken of in ver. 18 reached its culminating point. Thus there is nothing in ver. 19 limiting ver. 18 to that act of crucifixion which the several clauses of the verse compel us to pass.—And when he had said this, he saith unto him, Follow me. To confine the meaning of the words 'Follow me' to the literal following of Jesus on the pre-

sent occasion,—as if all their import were that Jesus had gone forward a few steps, telling Peter to come after Him,—is so much out of keeping with the sense in which similar words are used even in the earlier Gospels, and so much more out of keeping with the style of John, that such an interpretation hardly needs to be refuted. That indeed our Lord did move forward, and that He meant Peter to follow Him, is highly probable,—especially from ver. 20. But this is certainly not the whole meaning. The external following fore-shadows an imitation of Christ in His accomplishment of the Father's will, and His drinking of the cup put into his hands by the Father, until, in the one case as in the other, the cross itself is reached.

## CHAPTER XXI. 20-23.

### *The Termination of the Toil and Suffering of Christian Witness-bearing.*

- 20 **T**HEN<sup>1</sup> Peter, turning about, seeth the <sup>a</sup>disciple whom Jesus loved following; which also <sup>b</sup>leaned<sup>2</sup> on his breast at<sup>3</sup> supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee? <sup>a</sup> Ver. 7. <sup>b</sup> Chap. xiii. 25.
- 21 Peter<sup>4</sup> seeing him saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this
- 22 man do?<sup>5</sup> Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he <sup>c</sup>tarry<sup>6</sup> <sup>d</sup>till
- 23 I come, what is that to thee? <sup>e</sup>follow thou me. Then went this saying abroad<sup>7</sup> among the <sup>f</sup>brethren, that <sup>g</sup>that<sup>8</sup> disciple should not die:<sup>10</sup> yet Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die;<sup>11</sup> but, If I will that he tarry<sup>6</sup> till I come, what is that to thee? <sup>c</sup> 1 Cor. xv. 6; Phil. i. 25. <sup>d</sup> Matt. xvi. 27, 28, xxv. 31; 1 Cor. iv. 5, xi. 26; Rev. ii. 25, iii. 11, xxii. 7, 20. <sup>e</sup> Ver. 19. <sup>f</sup> Acts ix. 30, etc.

<sup>1</sup> omit Then

<sup>5</sup> and what of this man?

<sup>8</sup> omit that

<sup>2</sup> add back

<sup>6</sup> abide

<sup>10</sup> dieth not

<sup>3</sup> add the

<sup>7</sup> This word therefore went forth

He dieth not

<sup>4</sup> add therefore

CONTENTS. The effort to introduce the passage now before us into organic unity with the rest of the chapter has certainly been attended with as much difficulty and as little success as in the case of the second paragraph. Without dwelling upon the opinions of others we apply the same principle as that applied to the second paragraph, and regard this third paragraph of the Epilogue of the Gospel as the counterpart of the third paragraph of the Prologue (chap. i. 14-18). That paragraph is occupied with the coming of Him who in the second paragraph had been borne witness to before His Incarnation by Old Testament prophecy. He is indeed expressly spoken of in prophecy as 'He who is to come;' and when He comes preparatory witnessing exists no more. Here in like manner Jesus in effect speaks of Himself as the One 'who is to come;' at all events, twice over the words 'until I come' are used (vers. 22, 23). The 'coming' is thus shown to be a prominent thought of the passage; and its correspondence with the 'coming' of the Prologue must strike every one. The contents of this paragraph, therefore, are not to give us information about the future of John as an individual,—information which they do not give; but they are designed to call our thoughts to the termination of Christian witnessing, which will at length, with

all its labours and sufferings, close in the joy of the Second Coming of the Lord. The special interpretation of the verses will confirm this view.

Ver. 20. Peter turning about seeth the disciple whom Jesus loved following, which also leaned back on his breast at the supper, and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth thee. It is impossible to think that the Evangelist intends us to confine our attention to the literal details given in this verse. The long description by which he indicates himself would be entirely out of place were he brought before us as simply taking a few steps after Jesus and Peter. Besides this, the verb 'to follow,' which, as we have seen, was used metaphorically as well as literally in ver. 19, must certainly be understood in the same sense here. John is here not simply the individual: he is the apostle following Peter in apostolic work, and like him, representative (though in a different aspect) of all Christian labourers and witnesses. What the difference of aspect is, is shown by the special manner in which he describes himself. He is not only the 'disciple whom Jesus loved;' he is the apostle who 'leaned back on the breast of Jesus at the supper and said, Lord, which is he that betrayeth Thee?' (chap. xiii. 12, 25). In other words, he is the apostle whose mind was nearest

to the mind of Jesus, and whom Jesus found most fitted to receive the deeper revelations of His will. John, then, represents an entirely different aspect of Christian witnessing from that represented by Peter. The latter represents the struggle, and the death at the end of it, by which God is glorified. The other represents patient waiting for the glorious revelation of Jesus at His Second Coming.

Vers. 21, 22. *Peter therefore seeing him saith to Jesus, Lord, and what of this man?* It was a natural question. Although Peter did not know the full meaning of the words just addressed to himself, he felt that they betokened trial, sorrow, perhaps even prison and death. When, therefore, he saw John following Jesus, nothing would more readily occur to him than to ask, And what, Lord, shall be his fate? Yet the answer of Jesus evidently implies that there was something not altogether to be commended in the spirit or in the tone of Peter's question. We cannot imagine that such an answer would have been given to a question in which affectionate interest was the leading feature. We have indeed no reason to think that the question was dictated by envy, but there was probably impatience of the calm spirit of John, of that calmness which had immediately before contrasted so strikingly with his own impetuosity,—for when he had thrown himself into the sea to hasten to his Master's feet, John had remained in the boat dragging to the shore the net with fishes. To this spirit accordingly Jesus replies.—*Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he abide till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou me.* In other words: 'Thou hast no right to be impatient of the quiet and meditative spirit of thy brother Apostle. True, I have spoken to thee of heavy trials only. But it does not follow that he may not be as faithful as thou art, or that he may not have his own trials, in the work given him to do. Thou art right, I praise thy spirit, only preparing thee for the inevitable consequences. But his spirit is right too. Let it be *thy* concern' ('thou' is emphatic) 'to follow Me; and as for him, if I will that he abide till I come, what is that to thee?' By the 'coming' here spoken of can be understood nothing but the Second Coming of the Lord. It is the object of Jesus, as we shall see more fully on ver. 23, to give emphasis to the thought of His Second Coming, that He may thus bring out the truth that

then shall be the end of all toil and waiting,—that then His witnesses shall rest from their labours, with their works following them. At the same time we would not venture wholly to exclude the thought of the destruction of Jerusalem. But the relation of that event to the 'coming of the Lord' is a topic upon which we cannot enter here.

The point of the contrast then between the words spoken respectively to Peter and John, is not that between a violent death by martyrdom and a peaceful departure; but that between impetuous and struggling apostleship, ending in a violent death, and quiet, thoughtful, meditative waiting for the Second Coming of Jesus, ending in a peaceful transition to the heavenly repose. Neither Peter nor himself is to the Evangelist a mere individual. Each is a type of one aspect of apostolic working,—of Christian witnessing for Jesus to the very end of time. But the struggling witnesses are impatient of such as are meditative, the active of the passive, the warring of the waiting. They do not see that the work of the latter is not less important than their own, and that it touches the very springs of the Church's life. They undervalue it, because its struggle is not visible enough. They cry, 'This work, Lord, is it really like our work, work for Thee?' And Jesus replies, 'I judge of that. If I will that it go on until I come, what is that to you? Your path is clear; follow ye me.'

Ver. 23. *This word therefore went forth among the brethren, That disciple dieth not.* Yet Jesus said not unto him, He dieth not; but, *If I will that he abide till I come, what is that to thee?* Having reported the answer of Jesus, the Evangelist is constrained to correct a misapprehension of its meaning which had prevailed in the Church. At the same time his giving again the words of Jesus in the same form as before shows the great importance which he attached to them, and leads to the belief that something in them had for him a peculiar charm. If so, the words that attracted him could only be 'till I come.' It is the thought of this Second Coming that John finds to be the prominent point in the words of his Master. He beholds in them the assurance that there was an end fixed for all toil and suffering incurred in the task of witnessing for Jesus, when the Redeemer whom he loved will come again and take His disciples to Himself, that where He is there they also may be (chap. xiv. 3).

## CHAPTER XXI. 24, 25.

### *The Close of the Gospel.*

24 **T**HIS is "the disciple which testifieth of<sup>1</sup> these things, and wrote these things: and<sup>2</sup> we know that his testimony<sup>3</sup> is true. "And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one,<sup>4</sup> I suppose that even the world itself could<sup>5</sup> not contain the books that should<sup>6</sup> be written. Amen."

<sup>1</sup> witnesseth concerning  
<sup>4</sup> will

<sup>2</sup> witness  
<sup>5</sup> would

<sup>3</sup> one by one  
<sup>6</sup> omit Amen.

<sup>a</sup> Comp. chap. xix. 35;  
<sup>b</sup> John 12.  
<sup>c</sup> Chap. xx. 30.  
<sup>d</sup> Comp. Acts vii. 10.



**CONTENTS.** The two verses before us bring the Gospel to a close. Their authenticity has been much disputed; and not a few who accept the rest of the chapter as John's, refuse to admit that they are the production of his pen. Both external and internal evidence forbid our passing upon them so sweeping a condemnation. Ver. 25 is certainly authentic, and the force added to it, when thus viewed in its Johannine character, will, we trust, appear in the commentary. It is more difficult to speak of ver. 24. To accept the whole of it as our Evangelist's seems impossible. A passage in his Third Epistle has indeed been appealed to (ver. 12); but there the true reading is, 'We also bear witness, and *thou knowest* that our witness is true.' The difficulty in the verse before us does not lie in the use of the plural pronoun 'we': it is perfectly conceivable that the Evangelist might write 'we know' even if referring to himself alone. But it seems to us inconceivable that in one and the same sentence he should write, of himself, '*This is the disciple which witnesseth...*' and '*We know that his witness is true.*' We must conclude, therefore, that the last clause of the verse was written by the elders of Ephesus, or other Christians of influence there; and the only question is, whether this clause alone or the whole verse is to be traced to them. If the whole verse be their addition, it must have been intercalated because they wished to explain who the 'disciple whom Jesus loved' was. The word 'this' would then refer to him as the writer of the Gospel, who was well known in Ephesus to be no other than the Apostle John: the apostle and the 'disciple' are thus identified. On the other hand, the addition made by the Ephesian elders may begin with the words 'and we know.' In this case the appended words are to be regarded as the almost involuntary expression of their confidence in and admiration of one whose Gospel differed so much from the earlier Gospels that some may have doubted how it would be received. The first part of the verse will on this view be John's own statement; and its similarity to chap. xix. 35 is a mark of genuineness. The question at issue is thus reduced within very narrow limits.

Ver. 24. *This is the disciple which witnesseth concerning these things, and wrote these things.* To what has been said above upon this clause we may add that the use of the present tense, 'witnesseth,' seems to point out John as the writer of these words: any other would probably have written 'witnessed,' in conformity with the word that follows, 'wrote.' The word 'witnesseth' is used with great solemnity, and in the sense which it commonly bears (comp. note on chap. i. 7) in

this Gospel. The writer means more than that the things stated by him are true; he is uttering a Divine testimony to their inner reality and value. By his witnessing he claims to be more than a historian: he proclaims himself a prophet of God, commissioned to announce great verities to men. — 'These things' must be understood to refer not only to the things spoken of in this chapter, but to the Gospel as a whole. The analogous passage in chap. xx. 30, together with ver. 25 of the present chapter, renders this interpretation absolutely necessary. — **And we know that his witness is true.** As has been already said, it seems to us best to regard these words as an addition made by the elders of Ephesus. They could not fail to notice how different this Gospel was from its predecessors. It might seem to them that hesitation would be felt in receiving it, and they stamp it with their authenticating seal. Or, if such were not their motive, the words may be little more than a kind of involuntary breathing out of their awe and wonder, as again and again they brought the reading of this Gospel to a close.

Ver. 25. **And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written one by one, I suppose that even the world itself will not contain the books that would be written.** We have already expressed our belief that these are the words of no other than John himself. They seem to contain the Evangelist's own explanation of that principle of *selection* which he has followed throughout his work. To have given a complete history of the facts of Christ's life would have been impossible. He has chosen those only which bore upon his particular aim. It has been usual to describe this verse as a strong hyperbole. But is it not at once more reverent and more true to say that the language here used expresses the infinitude which the apostle beheld in the life of Jesus,—the fathomless depths which he knew his Lord's every word and every word to contain? And we may ask, as we read these words, What apostle or disciple of Jesus, known to us as belonging to the first age of the Christian Church, could have so spoken but that apostle whom Jesus loved? In no part of his work does he expressly name himself, nor is this necessary. He is named by almost every line that he has written, by almost every touch of the pencil with which he has drawn his picture. Let us imitate his example; and, instead of closing with the thought of the servant, close rather with the thought of the Master whose eternal existence was taught us by the first, and whose infinite fullness is now taught us by the last words of *this* Gospel.

## CHAPTER VII. 53-VIII. 11.

*The Woman taken in Adultery.*

53, VIII. 1 **AND** every man went<sup>1</sup> unto his own house. <sup>2</sup> Jesus<sup>2</sup> went unto the mount<sup>3</sup> of Olives. And <sup>4</sup>early in the morning<sup>5</sup> he came again into the temple,<sup>6</sup> and all the people came unto him; and he <sup>7</sup>sat down, and taught them. And the scribes and <sup>8</sup>Pharisees brought<sup>9</sup> unto him<sup>10</sup> a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her<sup>11</sup> in the midst, They say unto him, Master,<sup>12</sup> this woman was taken<sup>13</sup> in adultery,<sup>14</sup> in the very act. Now Moses in the <sup>15</sup>law<sup>16</sup> commanded us, that such should be stoned:<sup>17</sup> but <sup>18</sup>what sayest thou?<sup>19</sup> This<sup>20</sup> they said, 'tempting him, that they might have<sup>21</sup> to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with <sup>22</sup>his finger wrote on the ground, *as though he heard them not.*<sup>23</sup> So<sup>24</sup> when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, <sup>25</sup>He that is without sin among you, let him<sup>26</sup> first cast a stone at her.<sup>27</sup> And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground. And they which<sup>28</sup> heard <sup>29</sup>it, being convicted by *their own conscience,*<sup>30</sup> went out one by one, beginning at the eldest,<sup>31</sup> *even* unto the last:<sup>32</sup> and Jesus<sup>33</sup> was left alone, and the woman standing<sup>34</sup> in the midst. When<sup>35</sup> Jesus had<sup>36</sup> lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he<sup>37</sup> said unto her, Woman, where are those<sup>38</sup> thine accusers?<sup>39</sup> <sup>40</sup>Hath<sup>41</sup> no man condemned<sup>42</sup> thee? She<sup>43</sup> said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her,<sup>44</sup> Neither do I condemn thee: go,<sup>45</sup> and <sup>46</sup>'sin no more.

<sup>1</sup> And they went each one <sup>2</sup> But Jesus <sup>3</sup> And at dawn <sup>4</sup> temple-courts <sup>5</sup> add the <sup>6</sup> bring  
<sup>7</sup> omit unto him <sup>8</sup> and making her stand <sup>9</sup> Teacher <sup>10</sup> hath been taken committing adultery  
<sup>11</sup> Now in the law Moses <sup>12</sup> commanded to stone such: <sup>13</sup> omit but  
<sup>14</sup> what therefore sayest thou concerning her? <sup>15</sup> But this <sup>16</sup> add whereof <sup>17</sup> omit as though he heard them not.  
<sup>18</sup> But <sup>19</sup> add be the <sup>20</sup> first to cast the stone upon her <sup>21</sup> But they, when they  
<sup>22</sup> omit being convicted by their own conscience <sup>23</sup> elder <sup>24</sup> omit even unto the last <sup>25</sup> he <sup>26</sup> who was  
<sup>27</sup> And <sup>28</sup> omit had <sup>29</sup> omit saw none but the woman, he <sup>30</sup> they <sup>31</sup> omit thine accusers  
<sup>32</sup> did <sup>33</sup> condemn <sup>34</sup> And she <sup>35</sup> omit unto her <sup>36</sup> go thy way <sup>37</sup> from this time

CONTENTS. The almost unanimous voice of modern criticism pronounces the narrative before us to be no genuine part of the Gospel of John. The section is wanting in the oldest and most trustworthy MSS. of the Gospel, and in several of the most ancient versions. It is passed by without notice in the commentaries of some of the earliest and most critical fathers of the Church. It is marked by an unusually large number of various readings,—a circumstance always highly suspicious. It is full of expressions not found elsewhere in the Fourth Gospel, some of the chief of which will be noticed in the comment. It interrupts the flow of the section where it occurs,—chap. viii. 12 connecting itself directly with that part of chap. vii. which closes with ver. 52. Finally, MSS. which contain the section introduce it at various places,—some at the close of the Gospel; others after chap. vii. 36; while in a third class it has no place in John at all, but is read in the Gospel of Luke, at the close of chap. xxi. These considerations are decisive; and the narrative must be set aside as no part of the work in which it occurs. How the section found its way into the place which it now occupies it is impossible to say. Various conjectures, more or less plausible, have been offered on the point, but all of them are destitute of proof. It does not follow, however, that the incident itself is not true. We know that an incident, very similar to this, probably indeed the same, was related in the early Apocryphal Gospel of the Hebrews; and this circumstance lends probability to the belief that the events actually happened. But the great argument in favour of the truth of the story is afforded by the character of the narrative itself. It bears the almost unmistakable impress of a wisdom which could not have originated with the men of our Lord's time, and which (as is shown by the objections often made to it) the world even in our own time hardly comprehends. It may be noted in addition that the incident bears in its spirit a striking similarity to that recorded in Mark x. 13-17 (Matt. xxii. 15-22; Luke xx. 20-26). Bishop Lightfoot adduces strong evidence to show that the story was one of the illustrative anecdotes of Papias (*Contemp. Review*, vol. xxvi. p. 847). If so, it must have been in circulation from the very earliest times.

Ver. 53. **And they went each one unto his own house.** The first words of the section confirm the doubts which we have expressed as to its genuineness. They are not a natural mode of describing the breaking up of the Sanhedrin which had been in assembly (ver. 45); and no

other persons have been mentioned to whom it is possible to apply them.

Ver. 1. **But Jesus went unto the mount of Olives.** No mention is made of the Mount of Olives in any other passage of the Fourth Gospel, but it is more than once spoken of in the Gospel of Luke as a place to which Jesus was wont to retire at the close of His daily labours in Jerusalem during the Passion week. He could thus pass from the hurry and confusion of a large city to the solitude of a hillside or of its retiring hollows, where the sense of peace is deepened by the thought of the busy life which is so near at hand. It is probable that our Lord intended to spend the whole night upon the Mount; and it may be that He would spend it as He did before making choice of His twelve apostles, 'in prayer to God,' (Luke vi. 12).

Ver. 2. **And at dawn he came again into the temple-courts, and all the people came unto him, and he sat down and taught them.** With the return of day Jesus resumed His teaching of the people; and they, on their part, seem to have been powerfully attracted by His words. According to the custom of the time, He sat with His hearers gathered round Him. The custom may be observed in Turkish mosques at the present day. The sitting of Jesus while teaching is not mentioned elsewhere in this Gospel. (Comp. for it, Matt. v. 1; Mark ix. 35.)

Ver. 3. **And the scribes and the Pharisees bring a woman taken in adultery; and making her stand in the midst.** . . . For the 'Pharisees,' comp. on chap. i. 24: for the 'scribes,' on Matt. vii. 29. John nowhere else mentions the scribes: they are frequently conjoined with the Pharisees in the earlier Gospels (Matt. v. 20; Mark vii. 5; Luke vi. 7, etc.). The scene described in the words before us must have been in a high degree impressive and exciting. The people are still gathered around Jesus and listening intently to His words, when suddenly His discourse is interrupted by the religious authorities of the land, who force their way through the crowd dragging the unhappy culprit along with them,—their faces bearing all the marks of eager passion to entrap the object of their hatred; their hands (as will appear more clearly from ver. 7) already grasping the stones by which they would at least indicate their conviction of the woman's guilt; their words, even before they reach the Saviour, sending a thrill of horror through the multitude,—'she has been taken in the very act.' Without the slightest feeling of compunction,

they compel the woman to stand in the midst of the throng, and then they address themselves to Jesus.

Ver. 4. **They say unto him, Teacher, this woman hath been taken committing adultery, in the very act.** Not only was the sin grievous: the point is that there was no possibility of denying it. No process of proof was necessary: there was no need to summon witnesses. We may even well believe that the very countenance of the woman would betray her own consciousness of her shame.

Ver. 5. **Now in the law Moses commanded to stone such: what therefore sayest thou concerning her?** The words 'concerning her,'—which do not occur in the Authorised Version, but which the best authorities lead us to accept,—throw light upon the scene. It is not a mere abstract contrast between Moses and a new Lawgiver that is before us: it is a special case. By the way in which Jesus deals with *this* woman shall the end of His enemies be gained. The law of Moses expressly decreed death by stoning only to a betrothed virgin who proved faithless, and to her seducer (Deut. xxii. 23, 24). It has been inferred, therefore, that this woman was only betrothed, not married. The supposition is unnecessary. It is enough to remember that adultery (in the ordinary sense of the word) was punishable with death; and that, in a case of violation of the Sabbath, the Divine command to punish the transgressor with death was interpreted to mean putting him to death by stoning (Num. xv. 35). We need thus have no hesitation in believing that the same mode of punishment would be applied to all sins similar in character to that which alone has the penalty of stoning expressly attached to it.

It is hardly possible to pass by without notice the singular italicised clause of the present Authorised Version at the end of ver. 6, '*as though he heard them not.*' The clause is intended for a translation of certain words of the Complutensian text which Stephens adopted in his editions of A.D. 1546 and 1549, but *not* in that of 1550, which became the *Textus Receptus*. The words are not found in any early English Version, neither in Wycliffe nor Tyndale, nor Coverdale, nor the Great Bible, nor the two Genevan Versions. They are also absent from the Rheims Version of A.D. 1582. They first occur in the Bishops' Bible. In the Version of A.D. 1611 they are not printed in italics. Dr. Scrivener says that they were not italicised earlier than A.D. 1769.

Ver. 6. **But this they said tempting him, that they might have whereof to accuse him.** In what, it may be asked, did the 'tempting' lie? The common answer is that, if Jesus pronounced for the sparing of the woman, His enemies would raise an outcry against Him as contradicting Moses; that if, on the contrary, He pronounced her worthy of death, they would accuse Him to the Roman Government as usurping powers which belonged to it alone. The explanation thus given is no doubt to a large extent correct. But the supposition is also possible that these scribes and Pharisees were not thinking of a calm judicial sentence which, if it suited their purpose, they might report to the Romans. They may have thought of a sentence to be executed at the moment. There before them was the guilty one; the crowd was round about her,—was even pressing upon her in all the excitement which the circumstances could not fail to awaken. Will Jesus reply to their question, No? They will instantly rouse the multitude against Him as contradicting Moses. Will He reply, Yes? They will stone the woman on the spot. Then the Roman Government will itself interpose, and Jesus will be seized as the instigator of the deed of blood.—**But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground.** Jesus will not heed them at the first: it will lend more weight to His reply if it be not too quickly given. We are not to imagine that what He wrote was a sentence to be pronounced. He was not thus to assume the office of a judge. What He wrote was probably some text or precept of Divine truth which, had He not been interrupted,

He would have proceeded to explain to the people. Such writing on the ground is still to be met with on the part of teachers in the East.

Ver. 7. **But when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him be the first to cast the stone upon her.** The scribes and Pharisees press for an answer. Then Jesus lifted Himself up (as we may well believe) with slow and solemn dignity, and spoke the words recorded of Him with a glance which must have showed His hearers that He read their hearts. They had no official right to condemn the woman; and our Lord's words embodied the truth, which finds always, as it found now, an answer in the heart of man, that we have no personal right to judge the guilty unless we ourselves are free from blame. There seems no reason to confine the thought of 'sin' here to the particular sin with which the woman was chargeable; the expression is quite general. It is from the mention of 'the stone' that we may draw the conclusion that the woman's accusers had stones in their hands.

Ver. 8. **And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground.** Jesus returned to His writing on the ground, and left His words to sink into the hearts of His hearers.

Ver. 9. **But they, when they heard it, went out one by one, beginning at the elder.** It was a correct comment on their state when the words 'being convicted by their own conscience' found their way into the text. They felt how entirely they had misapprehended the relation in which sinners ought to stand to sinners. They were brought to a conception of morality of which they had never dreamed. They learned that they could only vindicate that law upon which they prided themselves by purity of heart. They who came to condemn Jesus went away self-condemned, because He had opened their eyes to that spirit of the law which is so much greater than the letter.—**And Jesus was left alone, and the woman who was in the midst.** Nothing has been said of the departure of 'the people' (ver. 2). We may therefore suppose that they were still around Jesus and the woman; but they are silent and awe-struck. To all intents Jesus is alone with the woman. He reads her heart, as if His thoughts were concentrated upon her; and she can see none but Him.

Ver. 10. **And Jesus lifted up himself and said unto her, Woman, where are they? Did no man condemn thee?** The word 'condemn,' for which it is not possible to substitute another, conveys most imperfectly the sense of the original Greek. The meaning is rather, 'Doth no man doom thee to the sentence of which they spoke?'

Ver. 11. **And she said, No man, Lord.** Her answer is a simple statement of the fact. Perhaps the word 'Lord' may indicate the deep impression of the greatness of Jesus that had been made upon her mind.—**And Jesus said, Neither do I condemn thee: go thy way; from this time sin no more.** The word 'I' is peculiarly emphatic. The language, it will be observed, is not a sentence of acquittal: it is rather an intimation to the woman that she has still space given her for repentance and faith. Let her use her opportunities, and profit by the tender compassion of Him who drew publicans and sinners to His side, then will still more gracious words be addressed to her. Instead of 'Go thy way, from this time sin no more,' she will receive the joyful assurance, 'Daughter, thy faith hath saved thee, go in peace.'

We are told nothing of the effect produced upon the woman by the remarkable scene in which she had borne a part. But every reader must feel how worthy of Him who 'came not to destroy men's lives but to save them' were the words of Jesus upon this occasion. The narrative has lived on through all ages of the Church as an illustration, not less striking than any other recorded in the Gospels, of that Divine wisdom with which Jesus knew how to combine what human wisdom has never been able to unite,—condemnation of sin, and free and unrestricted mercy to the sinner.

## INTRODUCTION TO THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

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### *The Purpose with which the Book was written.*

THE 'Acts' of the Apostles occupies a peculiar position among the books of the New Testament. It takes up the story of the early days of the faith of Jesus of Nazareth, where the Gospels leave off; but the story taken up by the 'Acts' is necessarily a very different one from the simple gospel narrative. The first dwelt on the work of the sinless Son of God. The second tells how His loving but often faulty servants carried on the *begun* work of their Master. But at once the question meets us, Why have we not the general sketch which the title of the book would lead us to expect of the acts of *all* the apostles instead of simply the acts of two—and one of the two a former enemy of the 'twelve apostles' of the Lamb?

Why do the names of the Eleven meet us only once? Collectively they are certainly mentioned some twenty or more times. But, with the exception of St. Peter, the individual work of any one of them, save of St. John, is never recorded; and the acts of the beloved apostle are only mentioned in three out of the twenty-eight chapters of the book, and in these said passages with scant detail.

Now the Holy Spirit must have had some definite purpose to effect, when He guided the writer of these Acts to make what at first sight seems a stray selection out of the more memorable events which followed the Passion and Resurrection of the Son of God for the guidance and comfort of the mighty Church of the future.

What now was, as far as we can see, the Divine purport of the Blessed Spirit who inspired Luke to write this sequel to the gospel story? Bishop Wordsworth (Introduction to the Acts) very beautifully writes how 'St. Luke has written one work, consisting of two parts; the former his Gospel, the latter the Acts of the Apostles. The connection of these two parts is marked by the commencement of the latter with a reference to the former, and by the inscription of both to one person. The latter opens thus: "The former treatise," *i.e.* his Gospel, "I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and to teach, until the day in which He was taken up."

Let us remark, also, that in his latter treatise, the Acts, he resumes the subject at the point where, in the former, the Gospel, he had left it—namely, with a description of Christ's Ascension into heaven. Therefore it appears from the Acts, that in his former work, the Gospel, St. Luke had professed to give an account only of what Jesus began to do and to teach while He was in person upon earth. But now, in his second treatise, the Acts of the Apostles, he has a higher and ampler subject before him.

In this book, the sequel of his Gospel, the blessed Evangelist, being inspired by the Holy Ghost, comes forward and unfolds, as it were, the doors of heaven, and reveals to the world what the same Jesus, having ascended into heaven, and

being exalted to the right hand of God, and there sitting in glory, continues 'to do and to teach,' not any longer within the narrow confines of Palestine, or during the few years of an earthly ministry, but from His royal throne in His imperial city, the heavenly Jerusalem; and what, there sitting in glory, He does and teaches 'in all Judea and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth, by the instrumentality of apostles and apostolic men and apostolic churches, in all ages of the world; and what He will ever continue to do and to teach from heaven, by the power of the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven after His Ascension, even till He comes again in glory to judge both the quick and dead.'

This view of the purpose and design of our book is a true one, and thoroughly commends itself to the earnest and devout reader of Scripture; still it seems that it does not by itself fully answer the question proposed above. Other scholars have sought to find the answer in the assertions that our book contains the story of the progress of 'the faith' from Jerusalem to Rome; that it traces the various stages of the Church's expansion during the first anxious thirty years of its existence. Others, again, refusing to see in the Divine history any traces of a definite plan and purpose, assert that the 'Acts' is simply a collection of memoirs of such interesting circumstances connected with the first days of Christianity as happened to come under the observation of the writer and his friends.

We reject this third view of the book before us as unworthy and improbable. The second view, which represents it as the story of the solemn progress of the faith from Jerusalem to Rome, we accept as partly true. The first, which regards the Acts as the sequel to the Gospels, as the account of what Jesus *continues* to do and teach from His glory throne in heaven, we accept unhesitatingly as a devout and true conception of the spirit of the book. But we still feel that neither of these two latter descriptions sufficiently answers the question with which we began this section of our work.

We believe that the greater portion of the 'Acts' was arranged and compiled in its present form by Luke acting under the guidance and influence of Paul during his long imprisonment at Cæsarea, which lasted, we know, two years. This long solemn pause in the busy restless career of the great apostle was expressly foretold, and that not once or twice, by the Holy Ghost [see Acts xx. 23, xxi. 4 and 11],—the same Holy Spirit who foretold the apostle's captivity; and while foretelling, it gave courage to the gallant heart of Paul, for the Lord's sake, to put himself in the way of his enemies. The same Holy Spirit, during this solemn pause in the great life, brooded over the apostle's prison roof, and put into the prisoner's mind what he should tell to coming ages of the first beginnings of the religion of Jesus.

There was one saying of the greatest of the old Hebrew prophets on the subject of the expected Messiah which we love to believe was ever before the noble Paul when, in the prison room at Cæsarea, he thought out with the Divine Spirit's help the book of the Acts. 'It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth' (Isa. xlix. 6).

In the solitude of the Cæsarean prison the great Gentile apostle had ample leisure to reflect upon the work of his past life. Twenty eventful years had passed since the Lord appeared to him on the Damascus road; twenty years of incessant toil and struggling to carry out the will of that glorified Lord as it had been gradually revealed to him. Nor was the retrospect in any way a sad one to the imprisoned apostle. If the work had been excessive, and the sufferings intense, and the failures many and

grievous, the fruit of the work and the outcome of the suffering was great, even beyond the most enthusiastic hopes. The fairest portion of that rich and populous province we know as Asia Minor, now possessed numerous congregations of Christians—the result of his preaching and of his pupils' exertions. His work had penetrated into Europe, and the existence of many a devoted Christian Church in Greece bore witness to his successful toil. There seemed good hope that all the isles of the Gentiles, through the instrumentality of his work and teaching, would in the end become sharers in the glorious Gospel of Christ.

But the solitary prisoner—his powers of thought miraculously strengthened by the presence of the Holy Spirit, in whose strength he wrote and prayed, and preached and taught—looked on to a time, evidently not far distant, when his voice would be hushed in death. He was aware he possessed sleepless enemies among the Jews, even among the Jewish Christians. Wherever Paul went, these relentless foes dogged his footsteps, and often succeeded in marring though not in spoiling his noble work. What if in coming days these false patriots, these Jews jealous of the countless dwellers in the isles of the Gentiles being put on a level as regards salvation with their own favoured race, the chosen children of promise ;—what if in coming days, when he had passed to his well-won rest, these bitter foes to his free noble Gospel—offered to Jew and Gentile, bond and free, alike—should be able to persuade men and women that Paul was an innovator, a teacher of new things, that his doctrine was not what the Master taught in the beginning, that the twelve apostles of the Lamb had never agreed to his (Paul's) view of Gentile freedom and Gentile equality?

Then, aided by the Spirit of the Lord,—the Spirit whom the dying Master had promised should guide His own into all truth [John xvi. 13],—Paul wrote the inspired record which told how the ground stories of the Christian faith were laid ; how the holy Twelve chose the seven deacons ; how one of those seven, Stephen, with strange marvellous power, preached the same broad all-embracing Gospel which had since won the hearts of so many dwellers in far distant Gentile lands ; and then in the midst of his history he inserted at great length the leading arguments once used by the eloquent deacon Stephen before his violent death outside the city walls, burning words doubtless preserved with severest care in the Jerusalem Church. Coming generations would be able to see that the arguments of the deacon Stephen, when arraigned before the Sanhedrim, taught the same grand truths of Gentile freedom which he, Paul, had given to the many churches he had founded. His view, then, of Christian liberty—as entirely independent of Judaism—was no novel one, but was held and taught in the Jerusalem Church in those early days when he, Paul, was still one of the bitterest of the Pharisee persecutors of the followers of, and believers in, the risen Jesus of Nazareth. As he proceeded with his history, he related how Peter the Shepherd and the Rock subsequently welcomed the hated Gentile into the bosom of the Church of the Nazarene, in the person of the Roman soldier Cornelius ; how James, the Lord's brother according to the flesh,—James, the rigid and ascetic Jewish Christian whom also his (Paul's) enemies delighted to revere and honour,—had given to him, the Gentile apostle, the right hand of fellowship, and to his foreign congregations in many distant lands a charter of freedom, liberating them for ever from the yoke of Jewish ritual and time-honoured religious observances.

It should never be said in coming days that Paul was an innovator, or his teaching unsanctioned and unloved by the twelve apostles of the Lamb. In life he knew he had been one with them, in death he would not suffer the tongue or pen of a relentless and mistaken enemy to separate him from men who had loved him, he knew, with

a great love, from men who had given the solemn seal of their high sanction to all his works and days.

Thus the first twelve chapters of the 'Acts' were Paul's justification of his life and teaching. The second part of the book, with the story of his work and his success, told how those foreign peoples that had so long sat in darkness and in the shadow of death gladly received the good news of the universal Saviour Jesus Christ.

Thus in that dim future, down whose solemn vista the prisoner Paul gazed in the solitude of his Cæsarean prison, the writer of the book saw yet unborn generations in varied lands, and of many races, asking the question whether, after all, the free unfettered Christianity offered to all nations alike—whether the perfect equality of Jew and Gentile—whether the setting aside for ever of the ceremonial laws, and the ordinances and ritual of Moses—was the deliberate teaching of the men who had been with the Lord Jesus during his earthly ministry, or was merely the wild baseless dream of Paul the converted Pharisee of Tarsus; and to the ever-recurring question the story of the Acts would be the answer. Between the twelve first called apostles and the seven deacons, between the church of Jerusalem and the missionary churches of Paul, no differences of opinion existed—a harmony unbroken reigned in the undivided councils of the Church of the first age of Christianity. This is the message the plain unvarnished story of the 'Acts' tells out to all the churches.

#### *The Teaching of the 'Acts.'*

*Doctrine.*—The most remarkable feature in the teaching of the book is the prominence that is given in it to the work and offices of the Third Person of the ever-blessed Trinity—God the Holy Ghost. The history of the early days of the Christian Church, as told in these Acts, is, so to speak, a specimen of the way in which the Lord Jesus will continue to do and to teach from His royal throne in heaven, by the power of the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven in accordance with His own solemn words to His own the night before the cross: 'If I depart, I will send Him (the Comforter) unto you . . . when He is come, He will guide you into all truth' (John xvi. 7-13).

In strict fulfilment of the promise, we find that the Lord after His resurrection had *through the Holy Ghost* given to His apostles commandments (chap. i. 2). They were *to be baptized by the Holy Ghost* (chap. i. 5); to receive power *after that the Holy Ghost* had come upon them (chap. i. 8). At Pentecost the *presence and operation of the Holy Ghost* is related at great length (chap. ii. 1-13, see also chap. iv. 31). The sin of Ananias and of his unhappy wife is characterized as '*a lie unto the Holy Ghost*' (chap. v. 1-11). The seven deacons chosen to assist the twelve apostles are selected as men *full of the Holy Ghost* (chap. vi. 3); and Stephen, the most prominent of the seven, is especially mentioned as *full of the Holy Ghost* (chap. vi. 5). The great accusation levelled by the deacon Stephen, in his splendid apology for the new faith, at the proud chosen people was *that they do always resist the Holy Ghost* (chap. vii. 51). The elder apostles go down from Jerusalem to confirm those that had been baptized by the deacon Philip, in order that the baptized *might receive the Holy Ghost* (chap. viii. 15-17). Again we hear of *the same Spirit directly speaking* to Philip, ordering him to meet and to instruct a famous Gentile, an Ethiopian eunuch, the treasurer of Queen Candace (chap. viii. 29); and later we read how *the same Spirit caught away Philip*, that the eunuch saw him no more (chap. viii. 39). The purpose of Ananias laying his hands on the blinded Saul, after the meeting with the Risen One on the Damascus road, was *that Saul might be filled with the Holy Ghost* (chap. x. 17).

*The comfort of the Holy Ghost* is mentioned (chap. ix. 31) as the blessed atmosphere in which the sorely harassed Church was living.

*The gift of the Holy Ghost* is poured out on Cornelius and his companions on the occasion of Peter's solemn consent to the admission of the Gentiles to the Church of Christ (chap. x. 44-47).

*The Holy Ghost* it is *who separates* Barnabas and Saul to the Gentile apostleship (chap. xiii. 2), and *the same Divine person* guides the deliberations and inspires the edict of the first general council of the Church held at Jerusalem (chap. xv. 28). *The Spirit of the Lord* it is *who orders the way and the footsteps* of Peter (chap. x. 19, xi. 12) —of Paul and his companions in their perilous missionary enterprises (chap. xvi. 7); and the same Comforter and Guide speaks to Paul on many occasions (chap. xx. 23, xxi. 11). These are only a few out of the many notices of the work and office of the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity which we meet with so frequently in these inspired apostolic memoirs.

From the very brief summaries given us of the early apostolic addresses and sermons, we gather that the central doctrinal point of all their teaching of the first days was *the resurrection of Jesus Christ*. The resurrection of the body, and the final judgment, when all will have to answer for the things done in the body, was evidently dwelt upon again and again with intense earnestness. The offer of remission of sins, and the announcement of the cleansing power of the precious blood of Christ, were made by the first teachers of the doctrines of the Lord Jesus indifferently to all—to both sexes, Jew and Gentile, bond and free, young and old. The Gospel offered by the twelve apostles of the Lamb, by the few who were subsequently enrolled in that blessed apostolic company, by their companions and pupils, was free, hampered by no conditions, limited by no prejudice, confined by no ritual—all were invited to accept the Divine offer of reconciliation in the blood of Jesus. Men and women had but to repent, to believe in the Lord Jesus, and to struggle to live the beautiful unselfish life He loved, and taught, and lived.

But the memoirs of Peter and John, which Paul preserved to us in this holy book, taught another lesson to the Churches of the future—the *lesson of conciliation*—the duty of giving way, and the wisdom of yielding to others in matters comparatively indifferent. For instance, it must have been at no little sacrifice of personal and even of party feeling in the higher sense that James, the head of the Jerusalem Christians, who loved with an intense love the ritual and time-honoured ceremonial and religious observances of the rigid Jews, himself signed and induced his brother rulers of that community to give their full sanction to the charter of Gentile Christian liberty, which, while admitting the stranger and the alien to the full privileges of communion with the Church of Christ, freed them for ever from the burden of keeping the ceremonial law of the Jews, that law they prized above everything on earth (Acts xv. 1-33).

Peter, the ardent, impetuous, loving Jew, from his early training and subsequent position in the Jerusalem Church must have indeed suffered much, must have agonized and prayed many a weary night before he could have brought himself to accept the mission sent to bless and welcome the hated Samaritans into the bosom of his Master's Church (Acts viii. 14-17), or to receive the Gentile soldier Cornelius, the soldier of the hated Rome, and his companions into the number of the faithful.

Paul gave up much, and did great violence, no doubt, to his own dearest wishes, when he submitted to the gentle pressure and the loving advice of James, and took on himself publicly one of those burdensome Jewish vows he longed so earnestly to dissociate from true, vital religion. The examples recorded in the 'Acts' press, indeed, home to men with weighty power, that it is the will of the Holy Ghost



that God's true, loyal servants should yield to others, should give way to others at the cost of the bitterest personal loss, when such yielding and giving way involved no sacrifice of principle, and promised to strengthen the Master's holy cause.

Another splendid virtue—alas! rare in the long annals of church history—is written in fair characters on many a page of these Divine memoirs of the first days—*unselfishness, self-effacement*.

The great leaders in the Church of the first fifty years which followed the resurrection of Jesus Christ, seemed to vie with one another in their readiness to yield the foremost and most distinguished places in the community to new and more brilliant men. To give instances: Peter and John, James and the Twelve, put the learned and eloquent, the brave and devoted deacon Stephen at once forward; they allowed, no doubt invited him to take the foremost place among the leaders and teachers of the followers of the Crucified. And even the deacon Philip, at a very early date, seems to have filled a more prominent place in church history than the Twelve. The same great and noble men later cheerfully and readily acquiesced in the pre-eminence of Paul, and possibly even of Barnabas, in the work of laying the early stories of the faith.

In these inspired memoirs of the first thirty years of the existence of the Church of Christ, the gradually developing organization of the society of believers is carefully and repeatedly noted. The original number of the little company of apostles had been rudely broken in upon by the defection and terrible death of the traitor. The first care of the Jerusalem community was to fill up the gap in the number of the sacred Twelve by the election of Matthias, a Jew who had been a companion of the apostles during the whole of the earthly ministry of the Lord Jesus. As the work multiplies, the seven deacons are chosen from the body of believers, and formally consecrated as officers of the Church.

In the ninth chapter, we find a mention of another band of ecclesiastical organization in the Holy Land—one quite new in the religious history of the world. At Joppa an association of widow women evidently existed, women belonging to the new sect of believers in Jesus, a portion of whose lives was devoted to carrying out with great exactness the counsel and will of the Lord Jesus. This is evidently only a specimen, so to speak, of other similar church organizations among the female converts to the new religion that existed in the very early days of the faith in Palestine.

In the thirteenth chapter, we have mention of a more elaborated organization than any which has as yet met us, viz. in the capital of Syria-Antioch. Here *prophets* and teachers are alluded to as meeting together for the purpose of public prayer and counsel,—as publicly choosing and solemnly ordaining for the highest order in the Church two additional apostles.

In the fourteenth chapter, we find the newly-appointed apostles, Paul and Barnabas, ordaining elders in every church. (These already existed in the Jerusalem congregations, see chap. xi. 30.)

In the fifteenth chapter, an indication meets us that the Church's arrangements for internal government had greatly developed. An important council of the Church, consisting of apostles and elders (presbyters), meet together in Jerusalem, the national capital of early Christianity, and discuss grave questions respecting ritual and practice in the Church.

These, after their deliberation, report to the congregations, and a formal decree, running in the name of the president of the council, James the Lord's brother, the apostles and presbyters, and the whole Church of Jerusalem, is sent out to all the scattered and now numerous foreign Gentile churches, to Syria, to the provinces of Asia Minor, and most probably to Rome and Italy.

Appointed and definite days and hours for Divine worship appear to have been fixed by the Church at a very early date. These were, we know, modified and altered in later times to suit the Church's needs. At first daily (chap. ii. 46) they meet to break bread: no doubt the solemn breaking of bread is here referred to in memory of the Lord's last charge. Daily, too, they at first had some more public meeting for prayer and teaching (chap. v. 42); but as the numbers of 'believers multiplied,' the occupation and business duties of the majority preventing any such constant regular attendance, apparently the first day of the week was set aside, by common consent, for meeting together for the solemn breaking of bread in memory of their Master's sacrifice, and prayer, and exhortation, and teaching (see chap. xx. 7).

It is, perhaps, hardly needful to mention that the above memoranda respecting the most prominent features of early Christian doctrine,—respecting the spirit of conciliation which dwelt in the early Church, the noble readiness to forget self so noticeable in the first leaders of the new faith, in men like John, and Peter, and James, and Paul,—respecting the rapidly-developed system of Church organization, and of definitely-fixed Church services, are derived *exclusively* from the book of the 'Acts.'

Were the *Epistles* referred to, a vast mass of interesting information could at once be adduced in illustration of each of these points. The writer of this section, however, judged it better simply to confine himself to the information supplied by the 'Acts' on these subjects.

#### *Respecting the Authorship of the Book.*

Very early Christian writers are unanimous in ascribing the authorship of the 'Acts of the Apostles,' in the form in which we now possess this book, to St. Luke, the compiler of the Third Gospel, the intimate friend and long the companion of St. Paul.

The opening words of the 'Acts' are addressed to apparently the same person, 'Theophilus,' alluded to in the first verses of the Gospel bearing the name of and universally ascribed to Luke. These opening words, too, refer to an earlier written record containing the relation of the first days of the new faith. The 'Acts,' then, seems to be a second part of a previous history. This supposition fits in exactly with the universally current tradition respecting its writer.

Irenæus, who was Bishop of the Christian Church of Lyons in Gaul A.D. 178, and who in his youth was a friend of those who had conversed with the apostles, writes as follows:—'And that Luke was inseparable from Paul and his fellow-worker in the Gospel, he himself shows, not indeed boasting of it, but impelled by truth itself; for, says he, when Barnabas and John, who was called Mark, separated from Paul, and they had sailed to Cyprus, *we came to Troas*; and when Paul had seen in a dream a man of Macedonia saying, *Come over into Macedonia and help us, Paul*; immediately, says he, *we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us to preach the Gospel to them. Therefore loosing from Troas, we came in a straight course to Samothracia*. And then he carefully relates all the rest of their course till they arrived at Philippi, and here they spoke their first discourse. *And we sat down*, says he, *and spake to the women who resorted thither*, and who believed, and how many. And again, he says, *And we sailed away from Philippi after the days of unleavened bread, and came to Troas, where we abode seven days*, and all the other things he relates in order while he was with Paul' (*Adv. Hæres.* lib. iii. c. xiv. 1).

That curious fragment on the canon discovered by Muratori in the Ambrosian Library at Milan, and supposed to have been written not later than A.D. 170, also plainly ascribes the 'Acts' to Luke in the following words:—'The acts of all the apostles are written in one book. Luke relates the events of which he was an eye-

witness to Theophilus.' Clement of Alexandria, A.D. 190, writes to the same effect in his *Stromata*:—'As Luke in the Acts of the Apostles records Paul to have said, Ye men of Athens, in all things I perceive that you are too superstitious' (*Stromata*, lib. v.). Tertullian of Carthage, A.D. 200, distinctly also asserts that Luke was the writer of the 'Acts' (*de jejuniis*, c. 10). The great scholar and thinker, Origen, A.D. 230, also, in a casual allusion, shows that he too firmly held the same opinion respecting the authorship of the book. 'Some suppose'—Origen is speaking of the Epistle to the Hebrews, and stating that 'some suppose it (the Epistle to the Hebrews) was written by Clement who was Bishop of Rome, and others that it was composed by Luke who wrote the Gospel and the Acts' (Euseb. *H. E.* vi. 26). Again, Eusebius himself bears direct testimony to the universally received tradition that Luke was the author of this book. 'Luke,' he writes, 'who was born at Antioch, and by calling a physician, being for the most part connected with Paul, and familiarly acquainted with the rest of the apostles, has left us two inspired books. . . . One of them is his Gospel. . . . The other is his Acts of the Apostles, which he composed, not from what he had heard from others, but from what he had seen himself' (Euseb. *H. E.* iii. 4).

Thus the voice of the early Church, from the days of the apostles down to the middle of the fourth century, from Lyons in Gaul (Irenæus), North Italy (the Canon of Muratori), Proconsular Africa (Tertullian), Alexandria, Egypt, and Syria (Clement and Origen), the whole Eastern Church of the fourth century (Eusebius), bears one testimony that the Acts of the Apostles was a work compiled by the well-known Luke, the companion and pupil of Paul.

#### *On the Authenticity of the 'Acts.'*

There has never existed in the Church any doubt as to the authenticity of the book of the 'Acts.' In all ages it has been received by all churches as the inspired Word of God. We will rapidly review the principal historical evidence. The first clear allusion to the 'Acts' is found in the *Shepherd* of Hermas, vis. iv. 2, A.D. 140–150. It is *probably* referred to by Hegesippus (see Westcott on *Canon*, chap. ii. p. 232), A.D. 150–160. The Canon of Muratori, A.D. 170, speaks of it (see above in previous section for the quotation). It is contained in the Peschito (Syriac) Version. The Peschito Version of the Sacred Books was no doubt made, if not within, certain immediately after the apostolic age. The Old Latin (*Vetus Latina*) Version also has the Acts of the Apostles in its venerable canon; now the Old Latin was made, we know, *before* A.D. 170. The 'Acts,' then, long before the close of the second century,—that is, many years before the first century succeeding the apostolic age had closed,—was received as inspired, in the same sacred catalogue with the Four Gospels, by the churches of the East and West.

Proceeding onward in our inquiry. In the Epistle of the Churches of Lyons and Vienne to those of Asia and Phrygia, A.D. 177, we find a direct reference to the 'Acts.' Irenæus, A.D. 178; Clement of Alexandria, A.D. 190; Tertullian, A.D. 200; Origen, A.D. 280 (see references in preceding section), distinctly quote from and refer to the book. And Eusebius, A.D. 325, in his famous catalogue of the writings of the New Testament 'received generally' by the Catholic Church in the beginning of the fourth century, writes of our book in the following definite terms:—'It is natural that we should give a summary catalogue of the writings of the New Testament. . . . First, then, we must place the holy Quaternion of the Gospels, which are followed by the account of the Acts of the Apostles.'

Certain of the early heretics called the book in question, and declined to receive it as Holy Scripture. But their scruples were based solely on doctrines, not on any

critical grounds. Thus the *Ebionites* rejected the 'Acts' because it commanded that the Gentiles should be received into the bosom of the Church of Christ without submitting to the rite of circumcision. The *Marcionites* refused to acknowledge it on account of its teaching of conciliation in the matters of dispute between the representative Jews and Gentile converts. The *Manichaeans* disliked it and repudiated it, owing to the history it contained of the descent of the Holy Ghost. But such opposition only served to root it more fixedly in the affection of the Catholic Church. Besides being contained in the two most venerable of the versions, this book is found in not a few of the most ancient Uncial mss. (For list of those which contain the 'Acts,' see the section on p. 254.)

*Language of the 'Acts.'*

Throughout the book there is a substantial similarity of style and diction,—a similarity so great as to warrant the assumption that the whole proceeds from one hand (see Davidson's remarks in his General Introduction to the New Testament, vol. ii., 'Authorship and Sources of the Acts'). There is, however, a perceptible difference between the first and second divisions of the book, which indicates that the writer possessed different materials for these divisions, upon which he based his composition (see below on the materials used by St. Luke for the Acts).

The first half of the Acts is more Hebraistic in thought and colouring than the latter half, which is written in purer and better Greek. The reason of this is obvious: in the first portion of the book, Luke was dependent almost entirely on foreign sources; the second portion was for the most part the testimony of an eye-witness, supplemented by the assistance of his master Paul. Many of the same peculiarities in words and expressions are observable in the Acts and the Gospel of St. Luke. The following, amongst others, have been specially noted by Professor Hackett in his Commentary. In the Third Gospel, verbs compounded with prepositions are more numerous than in the other evangelists. They are found in the same proportion in the Acts. Matthew has *σύν* three times, Mark five times, John three times; while Luke employs it in his Gospel *twenty-four* times and in the Acts *fifty-one* times. *πορεύεσθαι* is found in the Third Gospel *forty-nine* times, and in the Acts *thirty-eight* times; but is rarely found in other parts of the New Testament.

Credner in his Introduction to the New Testament has enumerated not fewer than sixty-five distinct idioms, which he considers as peculiar to Luke's diction, as compared with that of the other New Testament writers, and nearly all these he points out as occurring both in his Gospel and in the Acts.

*Text of the 'Acts.'*

In the text of the Acts, there is a greater variety of reading than in any other book of the New Testament, except the Apocalypse; but notwithstanding this abundance of various readings, the text is *substantially* pure. Few differences of reading of great importance are found in this book, and no interpolations of any length or consequence—with the exception of viii. 37, ix. 5, 6, from *συλερόν* to *αὐτόν*; xxiv. 6, 7, 8, from *καὶ κατὰ* to *ἐπὶ σέ*—are found in the ordinary received text. It must, however, be remembered that the text of D and E, and their cognates in the mss., is in not a few places varied by many and striking interpolations and variations.

Dean Alford, with considerable ingenuity, accounts for the great variety of readings, many of them unimportant, by suggesting that the scribe of the 'Acts' was frequently tempted to introduce corrections and alterations in the text before him, with the idea of explaining backward references to the Gospel history, and of anticipating statements and expressions occurring in the Epistles.

It has also been suggested that the scribe of the 'Acts,' in passages where ecclesiastical order or usage was in question, has not unfrequently been moved to insert or to omit with a view of suiting the habits and views of the Church in later times.

*When the 'Acts of the Apostles' were probably written.*

There seems but little doubt that the 'Acts' were complete and put forth probably in the form in which we now possess them, about the termination of the two years' imprisonment at Rome described in the last two verses of chap. xxviii. The writer speaks of this period of the Apostle Paul's life with the detail of an eye-witness; but he says nothing about his liberation from his Roman prison; nor does he give the faintest hint that the captivity in question was terminated by a martyr's death. In another section of the Prolegomena—'Sources of the Acts'—it is shown as highly probable that the materials upon which the first part of the book was based were collected by Luke, the friend and companion of Paul during the two years' imprisonment of the latter in Palestine, in the Roman city of Cæsarea. We, therefore, with some certainty conclude that the book was composed and written in great part at Cæsarea, and finally completed and moulded into its present form at Rome during the captivity related in Acts xxviii., about the year of our Lord 62-63.

*The Sources of the 'Acts of the Apostles.'*

It is on the whole generally believed that the 'Acts,' in the form in which we now possess the book, is the work of one mind. The similarity of style, the recurrence throughout the work of the same words and phrases, and above all, the spirit of forbearance, conciliation, the readiness to sink all feeling of self on the part of the great leader of the faith of the first days, which characterize the whole history, tell us the varied memoirs were selected by one mind, and the mass of material were welded into an harmonious whole by one hand.

As has been already observed, the book falls into two great divisions. The first comprises the history of the acts of the church of Jerusalem from the day of the Master's ascension. This is completed in the first twelve chapters.

The story of the Church's first Foreign Missions, under the guidance and for the most part under the personal superintendence of the Apostle Paul. This is complete in the last sixteen chapters.

The first division—the history of the Jerusalem church and its work (chaps. i.-xii.)—is distinguished by its *Hebraistic* character.

The *second*—the memoirs of the Foreign Missions—is freer from Hebraisms, and is written in purer and better Greek.

The sources whence Paul and Luke derived their information respecting the laying of the early stories of the faith by the Jerusalem Church were no doubt various. We have already, in an earlier section, suggested Cæsarea—where the Apostle Paul was detained in captivity some two years—as the place where most probably the materials of the great history were gathered together and moulded into the form of a consecutive narrative.

Now, Cæsarea, a city of Palestine, and only three days' easy journey from Jerusalem, offered singular facilities to Paul, to whose prison outside friends, we are aware (see chap. xxiv. 23), had free access, and to his fixed and faithful companion, Luke, for gathering just the information and details they would need for the compilation of such a history as that contained in the first division of the 'Acts' (chaps. i.-xii.). If not apostles, doubtless apostolic men all that time were resident in Jerusalem. It is almost certain that at this period James 'the Lord's brother' resided permanently

in the Holy City, with men and women who had seen and heard the Lord during His Palestinian ministry. With them Luke would have had frequent intercourse; he would meet them often, and would be able to interrogate them of the past. Records treasured up in the Jerusalem Church, such as memoirs of the Ascension, of the first memorable Pentecost; reports, more or less exhaustive, of the first great sermon spoken in defence of the new faith by famous leaders, such as Peter and Stephen, no doubt existed in the Jerusalem community,—these would be seen and copied by the friend of Paul, and would by him be brought to the apostle's room in the Roman prison of Cæsarea.

At Cæsarea, too, we have good reason for believing, dwelt, during the imprisonment of Paul, the deacon Philip, who, in the years succeeding the martyrdom of his famous colleague Stephen, played so great a part in the spread of the faith of Jesus of Nazareth in the Holy Land.

This Philip, we can imagine, helped in no small degree Paul and Luke in their history of the beginnings of the faith.

In Cæsarea probably still dwelt the centurion Cornelius, the principal personage of the tenth and eleventh chapters, which specially relate the acts of Peter, and the part that foremost of the holy Twelve took in the admission of the outside Gentile world into the pale of the Church.

The sources whence the second division of our book was derived—the history of the Church's Foreign Missions—are easily discovered. Paul himself was the chief personage, and he had been present at by far the greater number of the events recorded in chaps. xii. to xxvi. Of the circumstances of the few transactions in which the Gentile apostle was not himself an actor, such men as Apollos or Aquila, no doubt, either at Cæsarea, or previously at Corinth and Ephesus, had supplied the necessary details. The 'Acts' were no doubt completed and finally revised during the Roman imprisonment, details of which we possess in the twenty-eighth chapter of our work. The twenty-seventh chapter is evidently the account of an eye-witness of the apostle's journey as a state prisoner from Cæsarea to Rome.

#### *On St. Luke.*

We have but little information concerning Luke given to us in the New Testament. From the statement respecting him in Col. iv. 11-14, where Paul distinguishes him from 'that of the circumcision,' we infer that the writer of the 'Acts' was a Gentile by birth.

Three times he is alluded to by Paul in his epistles. In the Colossian letter he is spoken of as 'Luke the beloved physician' (Col. iv. 14); in the little letter to Philemon, Luke is mentioned with the other fellow-labourers as sending greetings (Philem. 24); and in the Second Epistle to Timothy there is a well-known touching verse which, after telling of the friends who had deserted the forlorn and condemned apostle, writes of him thus, 'Only Luke is with me' (2 Tim. iv. 11).

In the 'Acts' the writer (Luke) apparently joins the apostle at Troas (Acts xvi. 10), A.D. 51-52. At Philippi, on the same missionary journey, Luke remains behind, and rejoins the apostle, after some seven years, again at Philippi, when Paul was on his way to Jerusalem, A.D. 58-59 (Acts xx. 5), and remained with his master and friend until the close of the period included in the story of the 'Acts.' Probably shortly after the events related in the last chapter of the Acts, Paul was liberated, and, once more free, set out on that distant journey which a well-supported tradition tells us extended as far as Spain. During this last period of the brave old man's activity, Luke was possibly with him. He was certainly his companion in his last imprison-

ment at Rome. (See above, 2 Tim. iv. 11.) A tradition, contained in Epiphanius (fourth century), relates how Luke preached in Italy, Gaul, Dalmatia, and Macedonia; and mentions how he united the double profession of a preacher and physician, that he lived to a great age, and in the end suffered martyrdom in Elæa in the Peloponnesus. Another tradition mentions that, by the order of the Emperor Constantine, his remains were brought to Constantinople, and interred there in the Church of the Apostles.

*The principal MSS. which (besides other parts of the New Testament) contain the Acts of the Apostles.*

DATE.	WHERE NOW.	
Cent. V.	London. British Museum.	A, CODEX ALEXANDRINUS. Presented by Cyrillus Lucaris, Patriarch of Constantinople.
IV.	Rome. Vatican Library.	B, CODEX VATICANUS. This is esteemed the most valuable text of the New Testament Scriptures in the world.
IV.	St. Petersburg.	℣, CODEX SINAITICUS. Discovered by Dr. Tischendorf in the Convent of St. Catherine on Mount Sinai in 1859.
<i>These three MSS. contain the Acts entire.</i>		
VI.	Cambridge. University Library.	D, BEZÆ. Presented by the Reformer Beza to the University of Cambridge in 1581. Defective from chap. viii. 29 to x. 14, from chap. xxi. 2 to xxi. 10, from chap. xxi. 17 to xxi. 18, from chap. xxii. 10 to xxii. 20, from chap. xxii. 29 to the end of the book.
VI.	Oxford. Bodleian.	E, THE CODEX LAUDIANUS. This MS. is so called because it was presented by Archbishop Laud to the University of Oxford. It is supposed to have been written toward the close of the sixth century. It is highly praised both by Michaelis and Tischendorf. There is a defect from 'O δὲ Παῦλος (chap. xxvi. 29) to ἀπελύθητι (chap. xxviii. 26).
IX.	Rome. Library of Augustinian Monks.	G, THE CODEX BIBLIOTHECÆ ANGLICÆ. This MS. receives its name because it is preserved in the Anglican Library of the Augustinian Monks at Rome. It commences at chap. viii. 10, and is complete to the end.
IX.	Modena. Public Library.	H, THE CODEX MUTINENSIS. It begins with chap. v. 28, and is defective in the following places:—From chap. ix. 39 to x. 19, from chap. xiii. 36 to xiv. 3; the portion from chap. xxvii. 4 to the end has been supplied in uncial letters by a later hand, about the eleventh century.
<i>The above references to the defects in D E G H are taken from Dr. Gloga's Introduction to the Acts (section vi.).</i>		

*Chronological Table showing approximately the dates of some of the principal events related in the book of the 'Acts of the Apostles.'*

To fix with any certainty the dates of the events recorded in our book is simply impossible. Every date has been discussed many times, and varied results have been arrived at. On the whole, the general chronology set down in the accompanying table is accepted, although, of course, there is much difference of opinion as to the precise years in which each event happened. We cannot even fix with precision the *exact* years of the birth and crucifixion of our Lord.

The dates in the earlier chapters of the Acts are of necessity more indefinite than those of the later portion, as the sources of the events recorded, as seen above, were various, and exact dates do not seem to have been considered of importance.

However, from the results arrived at, the reader, with these reservations, will be able to form a good general idea of the divisions of the period covered by our apostolic memoirs.

A.D.	ROMAN EMPEROR.	HIGH PRIEST.	
33 34 35 36	Tiberius.	Caiaphas.	Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus Christ ; Pentecost ; effusion of the Holy Spirit, Acts i. and ii. ; the events related in Acts ii. 42-vi. 8. (Roughly between A.D. 33-37 ; some, however, believe the Resurrection and Ascension took place as early as A.D. 30.)
37 38 39 40	Caligula.	Jonathan Theophilus.	Conversion of St. Paul, Acts ix. 1-19.  A.D. 38, 39, 40. These years we believe Saul spent mostly in comparative retirement in Arabia and Damascus (Gal. i. 15-18).
41 42 43	Claudius.	Simon Mathias.  Elionseus.	The acts of St. Peter, related in Acts ix. 32-xi., A.D. 41-43.
44			Martyrdom of James the brother of John, Acts xii. 2 ; death of Herod Agrippa at Cæsarea, Acts xii. 23.
45 46 47 48 49 50		Joseph.  Ananias.	St. Paul's first missionary journey, Acts xiii. and xiv., A.D. 45-47.
51			Some give A.D. 50 as date of Council of Jerusalem.
52 53			Council of Jerusalem, Acts xv. 2-29 ; second missionary journey of St. Paul begun.
54 55 56	Nero.		A.D. 52-53. Progress of the second missionary journey of St. Paul, Acts xv.-xviii. ; St. Paul at Corinth.
57			St. Paul's residence at Ephesus, lasting nearly three years, A.D. 54-56, Acts xix.
58			St. Paul again at Corinth.
59 60 61		Ishmael. Joseph Cabi.	St. Paul goes up to Jerusalem, is there arrested and imprisoned by the Roman authorities, Acts xx. 4-xxiii. 33.
62 63		Ananias.	St. Paul's imprisonment at Cæsarea ; his defence before Felix, Festus, and Agrippa, Acts xxiii. 33-xxvi. ; is sent to Rome ; the shipwreck, Acts xxvii.-xxviii. 15.
64 65 66 67 68			Imprisonment at Rome, Acts xxviii. 15 to end of Acts, A.D. 61-63 (?).  After St. Paul's presumed liberation, we believe from A.D. 63-64 to 67, was a period of renewed activity for the apostle. He was again arrested, and tried and condemned, and executed at Rome about A.D. 67-68





# THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

## CHAPTER I.

*The Ascension—The Election of Matthias as one of the Twelve Apostles.*

1 **T**HE former treatise have I made,<sup>1</sup> O <sup>a</sup>Theophilus, of all  
2 that Jesus began both to do and teach,<sup>2</sup> Until the day  
in which <sup>b</sup>he was taken up, after that he <sup>c</sup>through the Holy  
Ghost <sup>d</sup>had given commandments unto the apostles <sup>e</sup>whom he  
3 had chosen : <sup>f</sup>To whom also he showed himself alive after his  
passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty  
days,<sup>4</sup> and speaking of <sup>g</sup>the *things* pertaining to the kingdom of  
4 God : And, being assembled together with them, commanded  
them <sup>h</sup>that *they* should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for  
<sup>i</sup>the promise of the Father, which, <sup>k</sup>*saith he*, ye have heard of  
5 me. For <sup>l</sup>John truly <sup>m</sup>baptized with water ; but ye shall be <sup>n</sup>  
6 <sup>o</sup>baptized with the Holy Ghost <sup>p</sup>not many days hence. When  
they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying,  
Lord, wilt thou at this time <sup>q</sup>restore again the kingdom <sup>r</sup>to  
7 Israel ? And he said unto them, <sup>s</sup>It is not for you to know  
<sup>t</sup>the times or <sup>u</sup>the seasons, <sup>v</sup>which the Father hath put in his  
8 own power.<sup>7</sup> But ye shall receive <sup>w</sup>power, <sup>x</sup>after that the Holy  
Ghost <sup>y</sup>is come upon you : and ye shall be <sup>z</sup>witnesses <sup>aa</sup>unto me  
both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in <sup>ab</sup>Samaria, and  
9 <sup>ac</sup>unto the uttermost part of the earth. And when he had  
spoken these *things*, while they beheld,<sup>10</sup> <sup>ad</sup>he was taken up ; and  
10 a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they  
<sup>ae</sup>looked stedfastly <sup>af</sup>toward heaven as he went <sup>ag</sup>up, behold, <sup>ah</sup>two  
11 <sup>ai</sup>men stood by them in <sup>aj</sup>white apparel ; Which also said, <sup>ak</sup>Ye  
men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven ? <sup>al</sup>this *same*

<sup>a</sup> Cp. Is. xliii. 12. See Lu. xxiv. 48. <sup>b</sup> Ch. viii. 5, 14, ix. 31, xv. 3.  
<sup>c</sup> See Lu. xxiv. 51 ; ver. 2. Cp. Jo. vi. 62. <sup>d</sup> See Lu. iv. 20. <sup>e</sup> So Lu. xxiv. 4.  
<sup>f</sup> So Mat. xxviii. 3 ; Mk. xvi. 5 ; Jo. xx. 12. So Lu. xxiv. 4 ; ch. x. 30. <sup>g</sup> Cp. Mk. xvi. 15 ; Col. i. 23.  
<sup>h</sup> See Josh. v. 13. So ch. x. 30. <sup>i</sup> See ch. ii. 7. So ch. xiii. 31.

<sup>1</sup> omit have <sup>2</sup> to teach <sup>3</sup> or the Holy Spirit  
<sup>4</sup> during forty days appearing to them <sup>5</sup> for John indeed  
<sup>7</sup> dost thou at this time restore the kingdom  
<sup>7</sup> which the Father appointed by his own authority  
<sup>8</sup> or the Holy Spirit <sup>9</sup> my witnesses <sup>10</sup> while they were looking  
<sup>11</sup> and as they were gazing stedfastly <sup>12</sup> looking up into heaven

- Jesus, which is <sup>a</sup> taken up from you into heaven, <sup>d</sup> shall <sup>e</sup> so come *in* like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.
- 12 Then <sup>f</sup> returned they unto Jerusalem from <sup>g</sup> the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem <sup>h</sup> a sabbath day's journey.<sup>18</sup>
- 13 And when they were come in,<sup>14</sup> they went up into <sup>i</sup> an upper room, where abode both <sup>k</sup> Peter, and James, and <sup>l</sup> John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James *the son* of Alphæus, and Simon Zelotes, and <sup>m</sup> Judas
- 14 *the brother* of James. These all <sup>n</sup> continued <sup>o</sup> with one accord in prayer and supplication,<sup>15</sup> with <sup>p</sup> the women,<sup>16</sup> and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with <sup>q</sup> his brethren.
- 15 And in those days<sup>17</sup> Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (<sup>r</sup> the number of names together were about
- 16 an hundred *and* twenty,) Men *and* brethren,<sup>18</sup> this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which <sup>s</sup> the Holy Ghost<sup>19</sup> <sup>t</sup> by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, <sup>u</sup> which
- 17 was guide<sup>20</sup> to them that took Jesus. For <sup>v</sup> he was numbered
- 18 with us,<sup>21</sup> and had obtained part of <sup>x</sup> this ministry. (Now <sup>y</sup> this *man* purchased a field with <sup>z</sup> the reward of iniquity; and <sup>a</sup> falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his
- 19 bowels gushed out. And it was known<sup>22</sup> unto all the dwellers at Jerusalem; insomuch as that field is called in <sup>b</sup> their proper
- 20 tongue, *Aceldama*,<sup>23</sup> that is to say, <sup>c</sup> The field of blood.) For it is written in the book of Psalms, <sup>d</sup> Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: and <sup>e</sup> his bishoprick let
- 21 another take.<sup>24</sup> Wherefore of these men <sup>f</sup> which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus <sup>g</sup> went in and out
- 22 among us, <sup>h</sup> Beginning from the baptism of John, unto *that same* day that he was <sup>i</sup> taken up<sup>25</sup> from us, must one be ordained
- 23 *to be* <sup>j</sup> a witness with us of his resurrection. And they appointed two, Joseph called <sup>k</sup> Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and
- 24 <sup>l</sup> Matthias. And they <sup>m</sup> prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, <sup>n</sup> which knowest the hearts of all *men*, show whether of these two thou
- 25 hast chosen,<sup>27</sup> That *he* may take part of <sup>o</sup> this ministry.<sup>28</sup> and <sup>p</sup> apostleship, from which Judas by <sup>q</sup> transgression fell, that *he*

<sup>d</sup> Cited from Ps. lxxix. 25.  
<sup>e</sup> Mk. i. 1, 2; ch. xiii. 24.  
<sup>f</sup> Ver. 26 only.  
<sup>g</sup> Ver. 27.

<sup>h</sup> Cited from Ps. cix. 8. So Jo. xvii. 12.  
<sup>i</sup> See ver. 2. <sup>j</sup> Ver. 8. So ch. iv. 33.  
<sup>k</sup> Ch. vi. 6, xiii. 3.  
<sup>l</sup> Rom. i. 5; 1 Cor. ix. 2; Gal. ii. 8.

<sup>m</sup> Jo. x. 9. So ch. ix. 28. See Nu. xxvii. 17.  
<sup>n</sup> See Lu. xxiv. 48; Jo. xv. 27. <sup>o</sup> Ch. xv. 8. See 1 Sam. xvi. 7.  
<sup>p</sup> Mat. xv. 2, 3; 2 Jo. 9 in the Gk.

<sup>a</sup> See Mat. xvi. 27. Cp. Jo. xiv. 3; Phil. iii. 20; 1 Thes. i. 10. <sup>b</sup> 2 Thes. i. 10. <sup>c</sup> Lu. xxiv. 52. Cp. Lu. xxiv. 50.  
<sup>d</sup> See Mat. xxi. 1. <sup>e</sup> Cp. Ex. xvi. 20.  
<sup>f</sup> Ch. ix. 37, 39, xx. 8. <sup>g</sup> Mat. x. 2-4; Mk. iii. 16-19; Lu. vi. 14-16.  
<sup>h</sup> Ch. iii. 1, 3, 4, ix. 13, 19, viii. 14, xii. 2; Gal. ii. 9; Rev. i. 1, 4, 9, xxi. 2, xxii. 8. See Jo. title.  
<sup>i</sup> Jo. xiv. 22. <sup>j</sup> Expressed Jude 1.  
<sup>k</sup> See ch. ii. 42. <sup>l</sup> Ch. ii. 1, 46, iv. 24, v. 12, Lu. viii. 2, 3, xxiii. 49, 53, xxiv. 10, 33.  
<sup>m</sup> See Mat. xii. 46. <sup>n</sup> Num. i. 2. So Rev. iii. 4. <sup>o</sup> See Heb. iii. 7.  
<sup>p</sup> Ps. xli. 9. So Jo. xiii. 28. Or cp. ver. 20. <sup>q</sup> Mat. xxvi. 47; Mk. xiv. 43; Lu. xxi. 47; Jo. xviii. 3.  
<sup>r</sup> Mat. x. 4; Mk. iii. 19; Lu. vi. 16; Jo. vi. 71, xiii. 21.  
<sup>s</sup> Ver. 25, ch. vi. 4, xx. 24, xxi. 19; Rom. xi. 13 (Gk.); 2 Cor. iv. 1. <sup>t</sup> So Mat. xxvii. 7.  
<sup>u</sup> 2 Pet. ii. 15 (Gk.) Cp. Mat. xxvi. 15. <sup>v</sup> Cp. Mat. xxvii. 5. <sup>w</sup> See ch. xxi. 40. <sup>x</sup> Mat. xxvii. 8.

<sup>18</sup> near Jerusalem—a Sabbath day's journey off.

<sup>14</sup> when they were come in [to the city]

<sup>15</sup> the older authorities *omit* 'and supplication' <sup>16</sup> *or* with certain women

<sup>17</sup> and in these days

<sup>18</sup> *omit* 'men and'

<sup>19</sup> *or* the Holy Spirit

<sup>20</sup> who was guide

<sup>21</sup> numbered among us

<sup>22</sup> And it became known

<sup>23</sup> Akeldama

<sup>24</sup> and his office [*or* charge] let another take

<sup>25</sup> of the men

<sup>26</sup> that he was received up

<sup>27</sup> appoint one of these two—(him) whom thou hast chosen

<sup>28</sup> the place of this ministry

26 might go 'to his own place. And they gave forth their lots ; <sup>Comp. Nu. xxiv. 25.</sup> and 'the lot fell upon Matthias ; and he was numbered with <sup>See Judg. xx. 9.</sup> the eleven apostles.

*On the opening words of the 'Acts.'* 'The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach' (Acts i. 1).

There is a well-known Latin Fragment on the Canon, first published by Muratori, discovered in the library of St. Ambrose at Milan, in an ancient ms. which purported to contain the works of Chrysostom. The fragment in question claims to have been written by a contemporary of Pius, bishop of Rome, and must have been originally written not later than A.D. 160-170. In this most ancient work the Book of the Acts of the Apostles is mentioned as containing a record by St. Luke of those acts of the apostles which fell under his own notice. The writer of this most ancient fragment shows that this limitation must have been laid down by St. Luke, for he specially records how the martyrdom of Peter and the journey of Paul to Spain are both omitted in the history.<sup>1</sup>

This view, however, of the Acts by the writer of the fragment in question, on examination seems too narrow and purposeless. The universal and reverent reception of this book in all the churches from the earliest time points to some definite purpose and object for which the history was written, which purpose and object was recognised by the Church from the beginning. The position this book occupied from the very early days of Christianity in the teaching of the Church, leads us to conclude that it must tell the story of some peculiar and critical period in the Church's history, that it must relate some all-important and vital developments of Christian practice and government,—developments sanctioned at least, if not originated by men who had received the commission of founding and organizing the Christian community from the hands of the Master Himself. It occupies a position of authority in the early Church second only to that filled by the Gospels. These especially relate the story of the commission of the Twelve from Christ. The 'Acts' is the sequel to the Gospels, and records how the Twelve carried out the great commission themselves, and handed it down to other chosen men of many lands and of many races. The 'Acts' is no mere memoirs of events to which St. Luke happened to be the witness,—no mere history of the acts of a Peter or a Paul, except in so much as these distinguished apostolic leaders were the chosen instruments of Christian development and progress.

The first words of the Acts give us the key to the understanding of the *object and purpose* for which this book was written ; for it is surely no arbitrary interpretation which sees in the opening words of St. Luke's second treatise 'of all that Jesus began to do and teach,' a deep and far-reaching meaning. The writer of these Acts commences his memoirs of the early Christian Church by sharply distinguishing between the work of Jesus among men when He was in the

form of a man upon earth, and the work of the same Jesus from His glory throne in heaven after He has been taken up.

St. Luke dismisses the first part of his work by a reference to his former treatise, known among men as the Gospel of St. Luke ; which treatise related exclusively to our Lord's ministry when on earth, and implies that in those memoirs which he was about to publish—known subsequently among men as 'The Acts of the Apostles'—the continuation of the Lord's ministry was to be related. In the mind of the writer of these opening words of the 'Acts,' a most close and intimate connection existed between the work and ministry of Jesus on earth and the work and ministry of Jesus in heaven. The Gospel *completes* the story of the first period—the work of Jesus on earth ; the Acts *commences* the story of the second period—the work of Jesus in heaven.

These opening words with which St. Luke commences the 'Acts' throw light upon the whole book. They at once remove the first impression which leads men to view the Acts of the Apostles as detached memoirs,—or a recital deeply interesting containing inspired utterances, but on the whole as disconnected, without any set defined purpose. But this first verse we are now considering, when fairly examined, throws a new light over the history. The former treatise (St. Luke's Gospel) relates all that Jesus *began* to do and to teach till He was taken up. What St. Luke *was* about to do in his second treatise was simply to take up the thread of his first, and to relate the continuation of the gospel story, to show how the now risen and ascended Lord still worked among men,—how, though unseen, He still guided the footsteps of His chosen servants.

Ver. 1. *Theophilus.* Clearly a proper name. The Gospel of St. Luke is also addressed to him. There he is addressed as 'most excellent'—a title of honour applied to high officials, as to Felix (Acts xxiii. 26), and to Festus (Acts xxvi. 25). He was, no doubt, a convert to Christianity of high rank. Nothing, however, is known respecting his story (see note on St. Luke i. 3).

*Of all that Jesus began both to do and to teach.* Not, as Wordsworth well says, that St. Luke narrated them *all* (see St. John xxi. 25), but those things requisite and sufficient for the object in view. *Began* to do. See introductory note.

Ver. 2. *Until the day in which he was taken up.* The ascension of Jesus is the turning-point at which the gospel history of the work and teaching of Jesus on earth ends, and where the Acts, the story of His work and teaching from His throne in heaven, commences. The abrupt way of referring to the great event is noticeable—simply, 'He was taken up.' There was no need of adding 'into heaven,' the story of the ascension was so well known in the early Church.

*Through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles.* Jesus, who was anointed with the Holy Ghost (Luke iv. 1, 14, 18 ; Matt. xii. 28), in the power of the Holy Ghost gave commandment to the apostles to be

<sup>1</sup> 'Acta autem omnium apostolorum sub uno libro scripta sunt Lucas optime Theophile comprehendit quia sub presentia ejus singula gerebantur sicut et semote passionem Petri evidenter declarat sed et profectioem Pauli ab urbe ad Spaniam proficiscentis' (Canon of Muratori, *Recl. Reliquie Sacre*, vol. i.).

His witnesses, and to wait in Jerusalem till they were endued with power from on high (see Acts ii., The Day of Pentecost). Some commentators would, in spite of the grammatical irregularity which such a construction would involve, refer the operation of the Holy Ghost to which reference is here made, to the choice of the apostles; but the last commandments of Jesus in reference to the sequel of the Acts were in St. Luke's mind a point of great importance, while the choice of the apostles had already fallen within the range of gospel history (Winer, Part iii. sec. 61).

Ver. 3. **After his passion**—lit. 'after He had suffered, viz. the death of the cross. See Heb. xiii. 11, and 1 Pet. iii. 18. The term occurs thus absolutely in iii. 18 and xvii. 3 (comp. also xxvi. 23), and is a striking usage. It arose probably out of the impression which the painful nature of Christ's sufferings had made on the first disciples.'

**By many infallible proofs.** The Greek word, translated by 'infallible proofs,' occurs here only in the New Testament. It is used frequently by Plato and Aristotle, and denotes 'the strongest proofs of which a subject is capable;' 'an irresistible proof.' Be a renders it well, *certissimis signis*. The irresistible, incontrovertible proofs which Jesus gave to His disciples of His resurrection, such as talking with them, eating with them, walking with them, inviting them to look at and to touch His hands, His feet, His side, with the still visible print of the nails and the scar of the spear, are described in Luke xxiv. 36-48; Mark xvi. 14; John xx. 19, 29, and xxi. Comp. also John, First Epistle, i. 1, 2.

**Being seen of them forty days.** A better translation would be: 'Through (or during) forty days appearing (or manifesting Himself) to them;' for St. Luke does not intend to convey the notion that our Lord continued visibly present with any of His disciples during the whole forty days, but that during that period from time to time He appeared to them, and then disappeared,— 'proving to them His humanity by eating and drinking with them, yet weaning them, by vanishing suddenly, from dwelling on His corporal presence, and instructing them in His Divine power and perpetual though unseen presence by unexpected appearances among them and disappearances from them' (Wordsworth). There is also a note by this writer on John xx. 19, where the mysterious question of the resurrection-body of the Lord is reverently discussed. On the period of 'forty days,' see a short excursus at the end of this chapter.

Ver. 4. **And, being assembled together with them.** The translation given in the margin of the Authorised Version, 'eating together with them,' seems the more accurate one. Modern critics are much divided on the question of the true rendering here; the authority, however, of the Greek fathers Chrysostom, Theophylact, and Ecumenius, and also Jerome among the Latins, who understand the words in the sense given in the margin of the Authorised Version, seems decisive on such a question. The sense of the passage then is: 'And as He (Jesus) ate with them; He commanded them,' etc. No point of time specially distinguishes this meeting with the disciples when He partook of a meal with them. It was one of the 'infallible proofs' referred to in ver. 3, and may have been identical with the

meal by the lake which St. John tells us of (xxi. 12, 13), or with that they partook of together in Jerusalem (Luke xxiv. 41, 42); but it seems with greater probability to have been a meeting when the risen Lord and His disciples ate together, not mentioned in the Gospels.

**The promise of the Father** refers especially to the promises given through the Old Testament prophets to Israel, such as Isa. xlv. 3; Joel ii. 28, 29.

**Which ye have heard of me.** A memory of such conversations between our Lord and His own, as St. John related in his account of the night before the crucifixion (chaps. xiv., xv., xvi.).

Ver. 5. **For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.** He reminds them of the strange prediction of the 'Baptist' (Luke iii. 16; John i. 33). 'His words which you all remember respecting a future baptism with the Holy Ghost and fire, you will soon yourselves be able to test the truth of.' That fiery baptism of Pentecost with which they were so soon to be baptized. Calvin well calls the common baptism of the Church *ecclesie communis baptismus*, 'because it was a great representation on the whole Church of the subsequent continued work of regeneration on individuals' (Alford).

*The Last Interview with the Disciples*, 6-8.

Ver. 6. **When they therefore were come together.** This is a different meeting from that related above (vers. 4, 5). *That* was in the house where they partook of a meal together. *This* is the last interview with the Risen One on the Mount of Olives, which was closed by the ascension.

**Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?** Whether or no they knew that the end of their earthly intercourse with their Master was come, is uncertain. They felt, however, that *this* was in some way a peculiarly solemn meeting together; hence their question 'at this time,' signifies 'at once,' 'now,' or perhaps it looks forward a little and takes in the lifetime—'will it be restored in our lives?' What they understood by restoration of the kingdom is not quite clear; perhaps they hardly knew themselves. Their old views respecting a return of the golden age of David and Solomon had received a terrible shock by the crucifixion of their Master; but the resurrection and His promise of the Spirit had inspired them with new and even grander hopes.

Ver. 7. **And he said unto them.** The Lord's reply in the 7th and 8th verses tacitly sanctions their expectation of a great restoration, but gravely rebukes the self-seeking impatience of His Jewish followers, and by His broad command respecting their preaching and work, sweeps away all exclusive Jewish interpretation of that restoration being only intended for Israel. The whole teaching of the Acts shows—that in the sight of God all men were alike, and might share in the same blessings—His witnesses were to carry the good news of salvation to the uttermost part of the earth.

**It is not for you to know the times and the seasons which the Father hath put in his own power.** In spite of this warning, many of the Church's noblest servants in different ages, from the age of the apostles to our own days, have tried to fix these times; surely these ever-

recurring mistakes should call men back to consider the last words of the Lord whenever these vain attempts are made to fix times and seasons for the great restoration of all things. That day and that hour is known to the Father only.

**Ver. 8. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you.** The Lord again referred to that new power which should descend upon them which He had before promised them, and told them how, armed with this new strength, they should be His witnesses not only in the city and Holy Land, but to the isles of the Gentiles—to the uttermost parts of the earth.

*The Ascension, 9–11.*

In three verses the story of the Lord's ascension is told. St. Luke and St. Mark in their Gospels simply record the fact; they add no details whatever, with the exception of one beautiful and touching incident in St. Luke: Jesus was in the act of  *blessing them*  when He was parted from them; 'He loved them unto the end.' Now it has been asked with some show of reason why the great event of the ascension is not more frequently alluded to in the New Testament? The answer seems to be that the writers of the New Testament never seem to have regarded the ascension except as 'a scene' in the resurrection glory of Christ. On the resurrection they dwelt with deep earnestness, as the triumph of the Redeemer over death; they ever looked on the ascension as necessarily included in the exaltation of the glorified Jesus, of which St. Paul speaks in such passages as Eph. i. 20; Phil. ii. 9; 1 Thess. i. 10, iv. 16; 2 Thess. i. 7; 1 Tim. iii. 16; and St. Peter in his First Epistle, i. 21, iii. 22; and St. John in many passages of his Revelation.

**Ver. 9. He was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.** When the last words had been spoken, while in the act of blessing them (Luke xxiv. 51), the disciples of Jesus saw their Master lifted up from the ground; and as He rose, a cloud passed under Him—the bright cloud of glory which overshadowed Him on the Mount of Transfiguration, and which, in the wilderness journeys of Israel, now like a fire pillar, now like a cloud pillar, sailed through the air before the people as their guide. On this 'royal chariot'—as Chrysostom calls it—did the eternal Son of God ascend from earth to the heaven of heavens. 'The ascension of Elijah,' writes Baumgarten, 'may be compared to the flight of a bird, which none can follow; the ascension of Christ is as it were a bridge between earth and heaven, laid down for all who are drawn to Him by His earthly existence.'

**Ver. 10. Two men stood by them in white apparel.** Ewald suggests these two were Moses and Elias, as in the transfiguration; but had this been the case, St. Luke would surely have referred to it: they were two angels, who probably had an especial charge connected with Messiah's work on earth. St. John tells us of two angels in white who were keeping watch in the sepulchre where the body of Jesus had lain (John xx. 12). St. Luke also (xxiv. 4) writes of two angels in the form of men in shining garments in the empty sepulchre.

**Ver. 11. Why stand ye gazing up into**

**heaven?** The angels, while comforting them with the solemn assurance He *would* return to earth again, still gently reprove these loving followers of Jesus, who remained gazing upwards, not without a hope He might reappear. Their duty now was not quiet contemplation and still waiting, but real earnest work; it is a reproof which belongs to all ages of the Christian Church.

*Return of the Disciples to Jerusalem, 12–14.*

**Ver. 12. From the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a Sabbath day's journey.** Our Lord (Luke xxiv. 50) had led out His disciples from the city as far as Bethany, had blessed them and ascended into heaven; but Bethany was about twice a Sabbath day's journey from Jerusalem. This discrepancy is, however, only apparent; for the suburb of Jerusalem called Bethphage, which lay between the city and Bethany, was legally counted as part of Jerusalem. So the distance for the Sabbath day's journey would be reckoned from the point where the suburb Bethphage ended, to the spot on the Mount of Olives in the Bethany district where the ascension took place (see a long and exhaustive note of Wordsworth on 'The Place of the Ascension').

**Ver. 13. Into an upper room.** Some have supposed this was an apartment in the temple, arguing from the words of the last verse of St. Luke's Gospel, 'And were continually in the temple praising and blessing God.' It is hardly likely that the priests, bitterly hostile as they were to Jesus, would have allowed His followers the use of any room in the temple. It was very probably the same chamber in which the last Supper had been eaten.

**Where abode, etc.** This is the fourth catalogue of the apostles given in the New Testament. In this one the place occupied by Judas is vacant (see Matt. x. 2; Mark iii. 11; Luke vi. 14). Each of the four lists varies slightly in the order in which the names are given, and several of the apostles are mentioned under different names in the several lists. The reason for this last enumeration is evidently to introduce the subject of the election of Matthias to fill the place Judas vacated.

**Ver. 14. With the women.** These words are specially worthy of attention. In the Jewish temple the women were not admitted to worship God with men, but they had their own court, 'the court of the women.' Among the silent changes which Christianity has worked in society, none is more striking than the alteration which it has brought about in the position held by women. In the old world, they occupied in every relation of life a very subordinate place. The state of perfect equality now enjoyed was only brought about by the teaching and practice of Jesus and His disciples.

In this number are included those devout women who are mentioned as following Christ, who were with Him in the last visit to Jerusalem, who looked on the cross and then watched at the sepulchre. The Gospels give the names of some of these—Mary Magdalene; Mary the mother of James and Joses; Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward; Salome the mother of John, James, and Susanna; and with these was **Mary the mother of Jesus**, who is here mentioned for the last time in the New Testament. Ecclesiasti-

cal tradition gives her no prominent place, represents her as exercising no peculiar authority in the Church of the first days. One account tells us she died at Jerusalem, another that she accompanied St. John to Ephesus and lived to an advanced age.

**And with his brethren.** 'Neither did His brethren believe in Him' (John vii. 5). Changed by the resurrection, of which they were witnesses, from unbelief to perfect faith, we now find them throwing in their lot with the little faithful company who waited together till the Spirit promised by their risen and glorified Master should come to them.

*Election of Matthias into the Number of the Twelve, 15-26.—Address of Peter before the Election, 15-22.*

**Ver. 15. In those days.** The few days intervening between the ascension and Pentecost.

**Peter.** Various reasons have been suggested for this priority which St. Peter certainly possessed among his brother apostles. 'He was the first called' (Cyprian). 'He was the eldest' (Jerome). 'He earned this priority by his ready confession of faith in Christ' (Hilary). But that it was only a *priority* he possessed, not an *authority*, over the rest of the apostles, the testimony of the early Fathers, Greek as well as Latin, most amply shows. Peter in the early Church, from his age, from the personal friendship he had enjoyed with his Master, no doubt occupied one of the chief positions; but he shared his rank with Stephen, the first great Christian orator, during that martyr's short but brilliant career; with James, the Lord's brother, who was undoubtedly the head of the Jewish Christians; and later, with St. Paul, to whom the great missionary work outside of the Holy Land was entrusted.

**One hundred and twenty.** St. Paul mentions 500 brethren who on one occasion saw the risen Lord. But this gathering of 500 took place some time previous to this occasion, probably in Galilee. Even if it had taken place in Jerusalem, the difference in numbers would be easily accounted for, as many of the Passover pilgrims from Galilee had no doubt before this left the city.

**Ver. 16. The Scripture must needs have been fulfilled.** The Scripture referred to is Ps. lxi. (LXX., lxxviii.) 26; and Ps. cix. (LXX., cviii.) 8. The quotations are freely made from the LXX. Version. The most important variation is in the first citation from Ps. lxi., where in the original the plural instead of the singular is used,—*their habitation, their tents* instead of *His*.

Guided by the Holy Spirit, St. Peter finds in these words of the two Psalms this especially sad episode in the history of Christ plainly foreshadowed, and discovers in them an injunction to proceed to the election of another to make up the number of the Twelve.

**His bishoprick let another take.** St. Peter's words here give us the clue to the right understanding of the terrible imprecations found in some of the Psalms. They are no curses pronounced by David or any other king or prophet; they are never the expression of a longing for personal revenge, but are, as Chrysostom expresses it, a prophecy in the form of a curse pronounced upon some enemies of God and His Church, hereafter to arise. They are judicial sentences one day to be pronounced as the punish-

ment for some sin which, in the foreknowledge of the Almighty, would be committed perhaps ages later on in the world's history. Augustine in his twenty-second sermon, writing of Judas, well puts this view of the spirit in which the Psalmist wrote his words: *In figura optantis, prænuntiantis mens intelligenda est.*

While believing that the view above given represents the real meaning of the imprecations found in the so-called denunciatory Psalms, the writer of this commentary thinks it desirable to quote another and quite a different interpretation. 'We find these prayers for vengeance,' writes the Dean of Peterborough (Dr. Perowne, Hulsean Professor of Divinity, Cambridge), 'chiefly in four Psalms, the 7th, 35th, 69th, 109th.' 'Are these anathemas to be excused as being animated by the "spirit of Elias"?—a spirit not unholy, indeed, but far removed from the meekness and gentleness of Christ. Are they Jewish only? and may they be Christian also?' Dean Perowne apparently decides that they were Jewish only; 'the older dispensation,' he urges, 'was in every sense a sterner one than the new. The spirit of Elias, though not an evil spirit, was not the spirit of Christ. The Jewish nation had been trained in a sterner school. It had been steeled and hardened by the discipline which had pledged to a war of extermination with idolaters. . . . It is conceivable how even a righteous man under it, feeling it to be his bounden duty to root out evil whenever he saw it, and identifying, as he did, his own enemies with the enemies of Jehovah, might use language which to us appears unnecessarily vindictive. To men so trained and taught, what we call religious toleration was a thing not only wrong but absolutely inconceivable.' See Perowne on Ps. xxxv., and *General Introduction to Psalms*, page lxxii.

**Vers. 18, 19.** Some commentators have supposed these two verses to be an explanatory clause inserted by St. Luke, and do not consider them a part of St. Peter's speech. But the rhetorical style of these verses would seem to show that they are part of the original discourse.

The account here given of the death of Judas differs in some slight particulars from St. Matthew's story of the same event. The first difference is easily solved. In the Acts, St. Peter says Judas bought a field with the money paid for his betrayal of his Master. St. Matthew gives, no doubt, the exact account of the transaction when he tells us the field was purchased by the priests with the money Judas earned. This by no means contradicts the statement in the Acts, where Judas by a common figure of speech is said himself to buy the field which his money purchases.

The second discrepancy. The manner of the traitor's death is explained by the very probable suggestion that Judas hung himself from the branch of a tree on the edge of a precipice overhanging the valley of Hinnom; and that the rope breaking, he fell to the earth and was dashed to pieces. Dr. Hackett in his *Commentary* on this book gives an account of his visit to the supposed spot of Judas' death, and states how perfectly satisfied he felt with this explanation as being so entirely natural.

The third variation is the difference in the reasons assigned in the Acts and in St. Matthew's Gospel for the name 'Aceldama' given to the field. St. Matthew states it was because the field was purchased with the price of blood; St. Luke (in

the Acts), because of the traitor's violent death. There is nothing improbable in the hypothesis that both these reasons, one as much as the other, contributed to the awful title by which the field was afterwards known—Aceldama, 'the field of blood.'

Vers. 21, 22. The necessary conditions of apostleship were the having been an eye and ear witness of all that had taken place from the day of the baptism of John until the day of the ascension.

The office of an apostle is briefly summed up in the statement, 'He must be a witness of the resurrection.' This one event in the history of the Lord on earth is chosen as the central point round which all teaching respecting the life and work of Christ must cluster.

Ver. 23. **Joseph, called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias.** Eusebius, quoting from Papias (second century), relates of this Joseph that he drank a deadly poison, but through the grace of God experienced nothing injurious (*H. E.* iii. 39). He and also Matthias probably belonged to the number of the seventy disciples. Nicephorus writes of Matthias that he afterwards preached the gospel and suffered martyrdom in Ethiopia. Some apocryphal writings of little credit in the early Church bore his name.

Ver. 24. **And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, show whether of these two men thou hast chosen.** There is no doubt that this prayer was addressed to the glorified and risen Lord, for—(1) in ver. 21 Jesus is termed *Lord* (*ὁ κύριος*), to which *αὐτῷ*, *His* (resurrection), in ver. 22 refers; whence it appears that *κύρις*, *Lord*, in this 24th verse is naturally to be referred to Jesus also. (2) The selection of the twelve apostles is always ascribed to Jesus Christ. Compare Acts i. 2; Luke vi. 13; John vi. 70, xiii. 18, xv. 16, 19. See also Liddon, *Bampton Lectures*, vii. 'Homonoousion.'

Against this view it has been urged (see Meyer and De Wette's *Commentaries on Acts*) that the epithet *καρδιογνώστης*, *which knowest the heart*, is not one which properly belongs to Jesus Christ; but surely this can hardly be advanced in the face of such statements as are contained in John i. 50, ii. 25, vi. 64, xxi. 17, in which passages Jesus especially comes before us as *one before whom all hearts are open, all desires known*.

Ver. 25. **That he may take part of this ministry and apostleship.** The word *κλήρος* (*clerus*), translated 'part,' better perhaps 'the place,' signifies—(1) a lot, (2) anything assigned by lot; for instance, an allotment of land, or an official position. So Israel is termed the inheritance, the lot, or the portion of the Lord out of the tribes of the earth (*Deut.* ix. 29, LXX.). Jerome tells us that out of the whole body of Christians, God's ministers were called *Clerici*, either because they are the lot and portion of the Lord, or because the Lord is their lot—that is, their inheritance. The early history and associations which cluster round the well-known terms *clergy*, *clergyman*, *clerk*, *clerical*, must be looked for, in the first instance, in the various uses and meanings of this word.

**That he might go to his own place.** These strange words which close the traitor's gloomy story can convey no other possible sense than that Judas had gone to a place of condemnation. The phrase, 'to go to one's own place,' was a known

and received phrase in the Apostolic Age, and signified a man's going presently after death into his proper place—a state either of happiness or misery, according to the life he had before lived while on earth (see Bishop Bull's *Works*, vol. i. Sermon ii.). Polycarp (*Ep. ad Phil.*) speaks of apostles and martyrs of that age being with their Lord in their due place. Clement of Rome writes of St. Peter, 'Having suffered martyrdom, he went to his due place of glory.' Ignatius (*Ep. ad Magnes.*) tells us how two things are together set before us—life and death, and every one shall go to his own place. A rabbinical work (Baal Turim on Num. xxiv. 25) interprets with the same mournful interpretation an expression used of one who, like Judas, had been placed in a position which connected him in a peculiar manner with God. 'Balaam went to his place'—that is, 'to Gehenna.'

Ver. 26. **And the lot fell on Matthias.** 'The lots alluded to here were probably tablets with the names of the persons written upon them, and shaken in a vessel or in the lap of a robe (*Prov.* xvi. 33), he whose lot first leaped out being the person designated' (Alford, *Com. on Acts*). This asking God directly to interfere in the choice of an apostle by guiding the chance of a lot, was not unfrequent in the history of the chosen people, especially before the invisible but direct sovereignty of Jehovah was partially superseded by the election of an earthly king. The lot we find used for the division of land, Num. xxvi. 55; Josh. xviii. 10; in war, Judg. xx. 20; for the royal office, in the case of the first King Saul, 1 Sam. x. 20, 21.

In this solitary instance in the New Testament, to complete the number of the 'Twelve,' broken by such a strange and awful crime, the hand of God was thus directly invoked, but never again. The 'Acts of the Apostles,' a book to which in future ages the Church would often refer for guidance, contains no repetition of such an election, either in the Holy Land or in the Gentile countries. No church, from the days of the apostles to our own times (with the exception of the Moravian Church, Gloag, *Com. on Acts*), has ever attempted, in its election and choice of pastors, to follow the example of that first election in Jerusalem. The Church Catholic, while reverencing the unquestioned legality of the procedure in the choice of Matthias, has silently agreed to consider it as standing by itself in the history of the world, and as such never to be imitated.

#### EXCURSUS ON VERSE 3.

##### 'THE FORTY DAYS.'

This is the only place where the interval between the resurrection and ascension is specified. It has been suggested (see Ewald, *Apostelgeschichte. 1er Theil. 2te Hälfte*, pp. 56-61) that the ascension took place on the resurrection day, the first Sunday after the crucifixion, and that this hypothesis reconciles any apparent discrepancies in the several accounts of the ascension given by St. Mark, St. Luke, and in the 'Acts.'

Upon this supposition ver. 4 must be read in close connection with ver. 2, and ver. 3 placed in a parenthesis, as telling of another and post-ascension period which lasted forty days, during which period our Lord appears at intervals to different disciples,—now in Jerusalem, now in Galilee, on the mountain side and by the shore of the lake of



Gennesaret. These appearances are mentioned by St. John, xx. 26-29, xxi. 1, 22; St. Paul, 1 Cor. xv. 6, 7. This ingenious hypothesis, although it in no wise weakens the evidence given by the resurrection-life of our Lord, is not necessary to explain St. Luke xxiv. 49, 50. Forty days may well have elapsed between the meeting of Jesus and His dis-

ciples (the closing words of which are contained in ver. 49) and the ascension related in vers. 50, 51. The common opinion among the wide-spread Gnostic heretics was, that the resurrection-life of the Lord lasted eighteen months. See Irenæus, *Adv. Hæc.* lib. iii. 2, 'System of the Valentinians;' and again, Irenæus, xxx. 14, 'System of the Ophites.'

## CHAPTER II.

### *The Church's First Pentecost—The Holy Ghost and the Gift of Tongues—Its Effect on the Church of the First Days.*

- 1 **A**ND when <sup>a</sup>the day of Pentecost <sup>b</sup>was fully come,<sup>1</sup> they <sup>a</sup>Ch. xx. 16;  
2 were all <sup>c</sup>with one accord in one place. And suddenly <sup>c</sup>1 Cor. xvi. 8.  
there came <sup>d</sup>a sound from heaven <sup>e</sup>as of a rushing mighty <sup>d</sup>See Lev.  
3 wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And <sup>e</sup>xxiii. 15.  
there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of <sup>f</sup>Gu. ix. 51  
4 it sat upon each of them.<sup>2</sup> And <sup>g</sup>they were all filled with the <sup>g</sup>(Gk.).  
Holy Ghost,<sup>3</sup> and began <sup>h</sup>to speak with other tongues,<sup>4</sup> as the <sup>h</sup>Ver. 46. See  
5 Spirit gave them utterance. And there were dwelling at Jeru- <sup>i</sup>ch. i. 14.  
salem Jews, <sup>i</sup>devout men, out of every nation under heaven. <sup>i</sup>Heb. xii. 19.  
6 Now when this was noised abroad,<sup>5</sup> the multitude came toge- <sup>j</sup>Cp. ver. 6.  
ther, and were <sup>j</sup>confounded, because that every man heard them <sup>j</sup>So ch. iv. 31.  
7 speak in his own language. And they were all <sup>k</sup>amazed and <sup>k</sup>See Mat.  
8 marvelled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these <sup>k</sup>iii. 11.  
9 which speak <sup>l</sup>Galileans? And how hear we every man in our <sup>l</sup>Ch. iv. 31.  
10 own tongue,<sup>6</sup> wherein we were born? Parthians, and <sup>m</sup>Medes, <sup>m</sup>xiii. 52. So  
and <sup>n</sup>Elamites, and the dwellers in <sup>n</sup>Mesopotamia, and in <sup>n</sup>ch. i. 5, vi.  
11 Judea, and <sup>o</sup>Cappadocia, in <sup>o</sup>Pontus, and <sup>o</sup>Asia. <sup>o</sup>Phrygia, <sup>o</sup>3, viii. 17, ix.  
and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about <sup>p</sup>17, xi. 15.  
12 <sup>p</sup>Cyrene, and <sup>q</sup>strangers of Rome,<sup>7</sup> Jews and <sup>q</sup>proselytes, <sup>p</sup>So Mk. xvi.  
13 <sup>r</sup>Cretes and <sup>r</sup>Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues <sup>r</sup>17; ch. x.  
14 the <sup>s</sup>wonderful works of God. And they were all <sup>s</sup>amazed, <sup>s</sup>46, xix. 6;  
and <sup>t</sup>were in doubt,<sup>8</sup> saying one to another, What meaneth <sup>t</sup>1 Cor. xii.  
15 this? Others mocking said, *These men* are full of new wine, <sup>t</sup>10, 28, 30.  
16 But Peter, standing up with <sup>u</sup>the eleven, <sup>u</sup>lifted up his voice, <sup>u</sup>xiii. 14.  
and said unto them, Ye men of Judea, and all <sup>v</sup>ye that dwell at <sup>v</sup>4, 5, 6, etc.  
Jerusalem, <sup>w</sup>be this known unto you, and hearken to my words: <sup>w</sup>Cp. 1 Cor.  
17 For these are not <sup>x</sup>drunken, as ye suppose, <sup>x</sup>seeing it is *but* the <sup>x</sup>xii. 10, 11.  
18 third hour of the day. But this is that which was spoken by <sup>y</sup>Lu. ii. 25;  
ch. xix. 31. <sup>y</sup>Ch. xvi. 6, xviii. 23. <sup>y</sup>See Mat. xxvii. 32. <sup>y</sup>Ch. xvii. 21. <sup>y</sup>See Mat. xxiii. 15.  
<sup>z</sup>Tit. i. 12 (Gk.): ch. xxvii. 7, 12, 13, 21; Tit. i. 5. <sup>z</sup>So Gal. i. 17, iv. 25. <sup>z</sup>See Isa. xlii. 20. <sup>z</sup>Lu. i. 49 (Gk.).  
<sup>a</sup>Ver. 7. <sup>a</sup>See Lu. ix. 7. <sup>a</sup>Ch. i. 26. <sup>a</sup>See Lu. xi. 27. <sup>a</sup>Ch. xiii. 38. <sup>a</sup>See Jo. ii. 20. <sup>a</sup>1 Thes. v. 7.

<sup>1</sup> or was being fulfilled  
<sup>2</sup> or Holy Spirit  
<sup>3</sup> in our own language  
<sup>4</sup> and were perplexed

<sup>5</sup> tongues of fire parted among them  
<sup>6</sup> Now when this sound was heard  
<sup>7</sup> and the Romans who were sojourning there

17 the prophet Joel ; <sup>1</sup> And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, <sup>2</sup> I will pour out of my Spirit <sup>3</sup> upon all flesh : and your sons and <sup>4</sup> your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams :  
 18 And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out  
 19 in those days of my Spirit ; and <sup>5</sup> they shall prophesy : And I will show <sup>6</sup> wonders in heaven above, and <sup>7</sup> signs in the earth  
 20 beneath ; blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke : <sup>8</sup> The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before *that*  
 21 great <sup>9</sup> and notable day of the Lord come : And it shall come to pass, *that* <sup>10</sup> whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord  
 22 shall be saved. Ye men of Israel, hear these words ; <sup>11</sup> Jesus of Nazareth, a man <sup>12</sup> approved of God among you <sup>13</sup> by <sup>14</sup> miracles and <sup>15</sup> wonders and <sup>16</sup> signs,<sup>17</sup> which God did by him in the midst  
 23 of you; as ye yourselves<sup>18</sup> also know : Him, <sup>19</sup> being delivered by the <sup>20</sup> determinate counsel and <sup>21</sup> foreknowledge of God, <sup>22</sup> ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain :<sup>23</sup>  
 24 <sup>24</sup> Whom God hath raised<sup>25</sup> up, <sup>26</sup> having loosed the pains of death : because it was not possible that he should be holden of  
 25 it. For David speaketh <sup>27</sup> concerning him, <sup>28</sup> I foresaw the Lord always<sup>29</sup> before my face, for he is on my right hand, that I  
 26 should not be moved : Therefore, did my heart rejoice, and my tongue was glad ; moreover also my flesh<sup>30</sup> shall rest in hope :  
 27 <sup>31</sup> Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell,<sup>32</sup> neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou hast made  
 28 known to me<sup>33</sup> the ways of life ; thou shalt make me full of joy  
 29 with thy countenance. Men *and*<sup>34</sup> brethren, <sup>35</sup> let *me* freely speak unto you of <sup>36</sup> the patriarch David, that <sup>37</sup> he is both dead and buried,<sup>38</sup> and <sup>39</sup> his sepulchre is with us unto this day.  
 30 Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that <sup>40</sup> God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, <sup>41</sup> according to  
 31 the flesh, *he* would raise up Christ to sit on his throne ;<sup>42</sup> He seeing *this* before,<sup>43</sup> spake of the resurrection of Christ, <sup>44</sup> that his soul was not left in hell,<sup>45</sup> neither his flesh did see corruption.  
 32 This Jesus <sup>46</sup> hath God raised up, whereof we all are <sup>47</sup> witnesses.

<sup>1</sup> Cited from Joel ii. 28-32.  
<sup>2</sup> So Isa. xxxiii. 15, xlv. 3.  
<sup>3</sup> Lu. iii. 6.  
<sup>4</sup> Cp. ch. x. 45.  
<sup>5</sup> Ch. xxi. 9.  
<sup>6</sup> Ch. xi. 28, xiii. 17.  
<sup>7</sup> Rom. xii. 6 ; 1 Cor. xii. 10, 28, xiii. 27.  
<sup>8</sup> Ver. 22. See Jo. iv. 48.  
<sup>9</sup> See Mat. xxiv. 29.  
<sup>10</sup> Cited also Rom. x. 13.  
<sup>11</sup> So Lu. xxiv. 19.  
<sup>12</sup> Ch. xxv. 7 (Gk.).  
<sup>13</sup> Jo. iii. 2, vi. 27, xiv. 10, 11, xv. 24 ; ch. x. 38.  
<sup>14</sup> 1 Cor. xii. 12 ; 2 Thes. ii. 9 ; Heb. ii. 4.  
<sup>15</sup> Mat. xxvi. 24.  
<sup>16</sup> See Lu. xxii. 22. So ch. iii. 18, iv. 28, xx. 27.  
<sup>17</sup> 1 Pet. i. 2.  
<sup>18</sup> See ch. v. 30.  
<sup>19</sup> Ver. 32 ; ch. iii. 15, 26, iv. 10, 33, v. 30, x. 40, xiii. 30, 33, 34, xvii. 31 ; Rom. iv. 24, vi. 4, 5, 9, viii. 11, x. 9 ; 1 Cor. vi. 14, xv. 15 ; 2 Cor. iv. 14 ; Gal. i. 1 ; Eph. i. 20 ; Col. ii. 12 ; 1 Thes. i. 10 ; 2 Tim. ii. 8 ; Heb. xiii. 20 ; 1 Pet. i. 21.  
<sup>20</sup> Cp. Jo. x. 18.  
<sup>21</sup> Cp. Mic. ii. 13.  
<sup>22</sup> Lu. vii. 30 ; ch. xxv. 20 ; Eph. v. 32 in the Gk.  
<sup>23</sup> Cited from Ps. xvi. 8, 11.  
<sup>24</sup> Cited also ch. xiii. 35.  
<sup>25</sup> Ch. xxvi. 26.

<sup>27</sup> Ch. vii. 8, 9 ; Heb. vii. 4.  
<sup>28</sup> Ps. cxxxii. 11. See Lu. i. 32.  
<sup>29</sup> See 1 Kings ii. 10. So ch. xiii. 36.  
<sup>30</sup> Rom. i. 3. See Mat. i. 1.  
<sup>31</sup> Ver. 27.  
<sup>32</sup> Neh. iii. 16.  
<sup>33</sup> See Lu. xxiv. 48.

<sup>8</sup> before the great  
<sup>9</sup> approved of God unto you  
<sup>10</sup> by mighty works and wonders and signs  
<sup>11</sup> even as ye yourselves  
<sup>12</sup> ye took (*but the older authorities omit the Greek word*), and by lawless hands ye crucified and slew  
<sup>13</sup> God raised  
<sup>14</sup> I saw the Lord always  
<sup>15</sup> my flesh also  
<sup>16</sup> or in Hades  
<sup>17</sup> thou madest known to me  
<sup>18</sup> omit Men and  
<sup>19</sup> that he died and was buried  
<sup>20</sup> the older authorities omit the words 'according to the flesh.' They also omit 'Christ.' The translation then runs, 'that he would set (one) upon his throne.'

<sup>21</sup> He, foreseeing this  
<sup>22</sup> some, though not the older authorities, omit 'his soul ;' the translation would be then 'neither was he left in hell, or Hades.'

- 33 Therefore <sup>m</sup>being by the right hand <sup>ns</sup> of God exalted, and <sup>m</sup>Ch. v. 32  
having received <sup>n</sup> of the Father <sup>o</sup> the promise of the Holy Ghost, (Gk.); Phil.  
11. 9. So  
34 he hath <sup>p</sup> shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. For Mk. xvi.  
<sup>q</sup> David is not <sup>r</sup> ascended <sup>sa</sup> into the heavens: but he saith 19; Eph. i.  
20; Heb. i.  
3. viii. 1;  
x. 12, xii. 2;  
1 Pet. iii. 22.  
35, 36 hand, Until I make thy foes thy footstool.<sup>sb</sup> Therefore let Ch. i. 4. See  
all <sup>n</sup> the house of Israel know assuredly, that <sup>r</sup> God hath made Jo. xiv. 26.  
that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified,<sup>sc</sup> both <sup>w</sup> Lord and o See Gal. iii.  
Christ. 14.  
37 Now when they heard *this*, they were <sup>x</sup> pricked in *their* heart, Ch. x. 45.  
and said unto Peter and *to* the rest of the apostles, Men *and*<sup>sd</sup> (Gk.); Tit.  
11. 6. So  
38 brethren, <sup>y</sup> what shall we do? Then Peter<sup>se</sup> said unto them, vers. 17, 18  
<sup>a</sup> Repent, and <sup>a</sup> be baptized every one of you in the name of (Gk.).  
Jesus Christ <sup>b</sup> for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive <sup>c</sup> the q See Jo. iii.  
13.  
39 gift of the Holy Ghost.<sup>sb</sup> For the promise is <sup>d</sup> unto you, and r See Jo. iii.  
<sup>e</sup> to your children, and to all that are <sup>f</sup> afar off, *even* as many as 13.  
40 <sup>e</sup> the Lord our God shall call. And with many other words did r Cp. ver. 33.  
he <sup>h</sup> testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this <sup>i</sup> un- t Cited from  
toward generation.<sup>sb</sup> Ps. cx. 1.  
41 Then they that gladly<sup>so</sup> <sup>h</sup> received his word were baptized: s Erek. xxxvi.  
and the same day<sup>si</sup> there were added *unto them*<sup>ss</sup> <sup>i</sup> about three 32, 37.  
42 thousand <sup>m</sup> souls. And they <sup>n</sup> continued stedfastly in the v See Mat.  
apostles' doctrine and <sup>o</sup> fellowship,<sup>sb</sup> and in <sup>x</sup> breaking of bread, xxviii. 18.  
43 and in prayers. And <sup>p</sup> fear came upon every soul: and <sup>q</sup> many Ch. x. 36.  
44 wonders and signs were done by the apostles. And all that See Lu. ii. 11.  
45 believed were <sup>r</sup> together, and <sup>s</sup> had all *things* common; And x Cp. Zech.  
xii. 11; ch. v.  
46 <sup>n</sup> as every *man* had need.<sup>sa</sup> And they <sup>n</sup> continuing daily <sup>v</sup> with 33, vii. 54.  
one accord <sup>w</sup> in the temple, and <sup>x</sup> breaking bread from house to y See Lu. iii.  
house,<sup>sb</sup> did eat *their* meat with <sup>y</sup> gladness and singleness of 10.  
47 heart, <sup>a</sup> Praising God, and having <sup>a</sup> favour with all the people. s Lu. xxiv. 47.  
And the Lord <sup>b</sup> added to the church daily <sup>c</sup> such as should be So ch. iii. 19,  
saved.<sup>sb</sup> xx. 21.  
b See Mat.  
xxvi. 28.  
c Ch. x. 45.  
d So ch. viii.  
20, xi. 17.  
e Rom. ix. 4.  
f Isa. liv. 13;  
Joel ii. 28;  
ch. iii. 25.  
g Cp. Isa. xlv.  
3.  
h Ch. xxii. 21;  
Eph. ii. 13.  
i So Deut.  
xxix. 15;  
ch. x. 45; xi.  
15, 18, xiv.  
27, xv. 3, 8,  
14; Zech. vi.  
15. Cp.  
Lu. xv. 20.  
m See ch. xxvii. 37.  
n 1 Cor. x. 16 (Gk.).  
o 1 Cor. x. 15, iii. 1, iv. 26.  
p Lu. xxiv. 53.  
q See Lu. xvi.  
28.

<sup>i</sup> Phil. ii. 15 (Gk.). See Deut. xxxii. 5.

<sup>m</sup> Ver. 46; ch. i. 24, vi. 4; Rom. xii. 12; Col. iv. 2 in the Gk. So Eph. vi. 18.

<sup>p</sup> Lu. i. 65. So Lu. vii. 16. Cp. ch. v. 5, xi. xix. 17.

<sup>q</sup> Ch. iv. 32. See Mat. xix. 21.

<sup>r</sup> Lu. xxiv. 53; ch. iii. 1, v. 20, 21, 25, 42.

<sup>s</sup> Lu. ii. 52; ch. iv. 33 (Gk.).

<sup>a</sup> See Lu. viii. 40.

<sup>b</sup> See Lu. viii. 40.

<sup>c</sup> See Lu. viii. 40.

<sup>d</sup> See Lu. viii. 40.

<sup>e</sup> See Lu. viii. 40.

<sup>f</sup> See Lu. viii. 40.

<sup>g</sup> Cp. ch. iv. 4.

<sup>h</sup> Cp. ch. iv. 4.

<sup>i</sup> Cp. ch. iv. 4.

<sup>j</sup> Cp. ch. iv. 4.

<sup>k</sup> Cp. ch. iv. 4.

<sup>l</sup> Cp. ch. iv. 4.

<sup>sb</sup> or to the right hand

<sup>sc</sup> whom ye crucified

<sup>sd</sup> perverse generation

<sup>se</sup> and that day

<sup>sf</sup> and they constantly applied themselves to the teaching of the apostles, etc.

<sup>sg</sup> as any man had need

<sup>sh</sup> day by day those who were in the way of salvation

<sup>sa</sup> ascended not

<sup>sb</sup> and Peter

<sup>sc</sup> nearly all the oldest authorities omit gladly

<sup>sd</sup> omit unto them

<sup>se</sup> or breaking bread at home

<sup>sf</sup> or Holy Spirit

<sup>sg</sup> or Holy Spirit

<sup>sh</sup> or Holy Spirit

<sup>ss</sup> footstool of thy feet

<sup>st</sup> or Holy Spirit

<sup>su</sup> or Holy Spirit

<sup>sv</sup> or Holy Spirit

<sup>sw</sup> or Holy Spirit

<sup>sx</sup> or Holy Spirit

<sup>sy</sup> or Holy Spirit

<sup>sz</sup> or Holy Spirit

*Descent of the Holy Ghost on the Day of  
Pentecost, 1-4.*

Ver. 1. And when the day of Pentecost was  
fully come. The exact time when the great

miracle took place is specified. The Holy Ghost  
fell on the apostles and their company *in the  
course of the day of the feast of Pentecost.* The  
word 'Pentecost,' literally 'the Fiftieth,' is a sub-

stantive, and was used by the Hellenistic Jews to denote the feast of Weeks and the feast of Harvest (Deut. xvi. 10; Ex. xxiii. 17). The assertion that the feast of Harvest was also considered in Israel as the anniversary of the giving of the law from Sinai, appears to be merely a late rabbinical tradition; it is never once noticed by Josephus or Philo. This feast lasted only one day, and was considered one of the three great annual festivals of Israel. Wordsworth gives the following calculation, according in all respects with the most ancient tradition, which speaks of the descent of the Holy Spirit as happening on a Sunday. This time was no doubt selected, as being the first opportunity after the resurrection, of appealing with power to a great concourse of the people assembled from far. Multitudes of the Jews from all parts of Palestine, and also from other countries, were in the habit of attending these great annual festivals:—

Thursday, 14th day of the month Nisan, Christ institutes the Holy Eucharist.

Friday, 15th day of Nisan, He is crucified.

Saturday, 16th day of Nisan, He rests in the grave.

Sunday, 17th day of Nisan, He rises from the dead.

From the end of Saturday the 16th day of Nisan forty-nine days are counted, and the *fiftieth*, or feast of Pentecost, falls on a Sunday.

**They were all together.** 'All' here certainly includes more than the twelve apostles, as when Peter (ver. 14), standing up with the eleven, evidently speaks of many others on whom the Spirit had fallen. Very possibly 'all' refers to the 'hundred and twenty' mentioned in chap. i. 15. Many modern commentators prefer to understand from this expression a still larger company, composed of all believers then assembled in Jerusalem. Augustine and Chrysostom assume that the assembly on whom the Spirit fell was composed of the 'hundred and twenty' only.

**Together.** 'Perhaps because it was the Lord's day' (Lightfoot quoted by Wordsworth).

**In one place.** Certainly not in a chamber of the temple, as has been suggested, as such a gathering would not have been, under any circumstances, permitted by the Jewish priests or rulers, who were generally hostile to the cause of Jesus. If the number was limited to the 'hundred and twenty,' it was not improbably a private dwelling, and the same as that which previously afforded a place of meeting to the disciples on the solemn occasion of the election of Matthias into the number of the Twelve.

**And suddenly.** Although the disciples of Jesus believed that a crisis in their history was at hand, and that in some way or other the promise of their Master was very soon to be fulfilled, still the extraordinary event related in this and the following verses came upon them apparently without any previous intimation—suddenly, unexpectedly.

Vers. 2, 3. **There came from heaven a sound as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.** The external signs which attended the outpouring of the Spirit on the chosen band were but a *sound* and a *light*, nothing more, for neither wind nor flames were natural—they were both from heaven. The wind was unfelt, the fire neither burnt nor

singed; and yet the whirr of the rushing mighty blast filled all the house where they were sitting, and the flames, like tongues of fire, settled as a burning crown on the head of each one present. All attempts that have been made to show that these signs of the unfelt wind and of the fire which never burnt were merely natural phenomena (see Paulus, Thiess, and others), have signally failed. An earthquake and the wind storm which often accompanies it has been suggested as having happened on that first Pentecost morning; but the story of the 'Acts' only speaks of a mighty wind which no one man felt but only heard; while electrical phenomena, such as the gleaming lights sometimes seen on the highest points of steeples or on the masts of vessels, and which have been known to alight even on men, bear a very faint resemblance, if any, to those wondrous tongues like as of fire which crowned each head in that little company of believers in the Crucified, on that never-to-be-forgotten morning; in addition to which, as Lange well observes, such electrical phenomena belong to the open air, not to the interior of a house where the followers of Jesus were then assembled.

The account of the stupendous miracle, in common with nearly all the Bible recitals of supernatural events, is studiously short, and dwells on no details; it simply relates how and when it took place, without comment or remark, evidently assuming that the circumstances were too generally known and believed to require more than the bare recapitulation of the simple fact.

Three distinct events seem to have taken place—

(1.) There came from heaven a murmuring sound, like the sighing of a strong rushing wind. It seemed to pervade the whole house. Those assembled there all heard this strange weird sound, but none could *feel* that strong blast they heard so distinctly rushing round them.

(2.) And apparently almost simultaneously with the murmuring of that unseen rushing wind, forked flames shaped like tongues of fire filled the chamber, and a tongue of flame settled on the head of each one present.

(3.) And as the flame touched each head, every man received a consciousness of a new and mighty power, each one felt as man had never felt before—the presence and love of God. The ecstatic utterance of praise which followed was merely an outward sign of the grace and power which at once followed the descent of the Holy Ghost on these favoured men.

The new gift [of tongues] was the outward sign from heaven—(a) to encourage these first brave witnesses for Jesus; (b) to assure the Church that the Master's promise was in part fulfilled, and power was in very truth sent from on high.

Ver. 4. **And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, etc.** And then those fire-tongues—they saw flaming round their heads a bright and glorious aureole—seemed to speak from each man's heart, and to give utterance in a new strange language to the thoughts of awful joy and thankfulness which the new possession of the Spirit woke up within them; for they were joined now, as never man had been joined before, with the Spirit of the Eternal. It was the Spirit with all the fulness of Christ and His redeeming work. Under the old covenant, when the tabernacle was building, skilful artists like Bezaleel, leaders and judges like Joshua, were

filled now and again with the Spirit of God 'and the Spirit of wisdom' (Ex. xxxi. 3; Deut. xxxiv. 9). Solitary instances among the prophets of Israel may be cited where the Spirit of the Lord dwelt for a time in this or that servant of the Most High, but *now* for the first time began that intimate union which should endure through time and eternity between man and his God. Then was fulfilled the words of the Master's dying prayer: 'As Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us' (St. John xvii. 12); and from that hour the Spirit has never departed from His Church in spite of all her divisions, her errors, her short-sighted policy—has never left her, never deserted her; but in all lands, through all ages among those many varied sects which follow Him, though often afar off, His blessed Spirit has ever dwelt with those who strive to do His will, to carry out His work.

With other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. On the question *what* these 'tongues' were, see the general Excursus on the Miracle of Pentecost at the end of the chapter, and Schaff's *History of the Apostolic Church*.

*How the Multitude were moved by the Miracle, 5-13.*

Ver. 5. And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven.

**Dwelling.** The Greek word used here (*κατοικοῦντες*), according to classical usage, would convey the notion that the foreign Jews here alluded to were 'residents' in the city; but the context of the passage, while fully allowing this sense, forbids us to limit it to residents merely; for the words in ver. 9, 'dwellers in Mesopotamia,' etc., and in ver. 10, 'strangers of (or better rendered 'from') Rome,' clearly imply that these persons still had their homes in these distant lands, and were only present for a time in Jerusalem, most probably most of them on the occasion of the festival. It includes, then, those who dwell there permanently, and strangers on a visit to the city.

**Jews, devout men.** 'Devout men' (*εὐλαβεῖς*). The fact of their having left their country to dwell in the old centre of the theocracy, in the neighbourhood of the Temple, showed they were 'devout men' in the Old Testament sense of the word (see Chrysostom in Meyer). Some of these men, influenced by strong religious sentiment, desirous probably of being near the Temple and passing the evening of their life in the Holy City, had permanently fixed their home in Jerusalem. The general and widespread belief, that the time had now come when Messiah should appear, no doubt had influenced many of these 'devout men.'

**Out of every nation under heaven.** The Jews at this time were literally scattered over the whole world. Philo tells us how the Jews were dwelling in the greater number and in the more prosperous of the cities throughout the world. Agrippa, in *Josephus*, says: 'There was no nation upon earth which had not Jews dwelling among them.'

Ver. 6. Now when this was noised abroad; or better rendered, 'And when this sound was heard.' Calvin, Beza, and the translators of the English Version have understood these words in the sense of 'Now when this report arose;' the meaning of the Greek word, however, leads us to

the right sense of the passage. 'When this sound, i.e. of the rushing mighty wind, was heard, no doubt, over all the neighbourhood, probably, as Alford well suggests, over all Jerusalem (Meyer, De Wette, Lange, Alford, Hackett, Gloag, adopt this sense of the words).

**The multitude came together.** 'The house (ver. 2) may have been on one of the avenues to the temple, thronged at this time by a crowd of early worshippers' (Hackett).

Ver. 7. Behold, are not all these which speak, Galileans? The frequenters of that house, where the 'hundred and twenty' were gathered together, were no doubt well known to the 'devout men,' who had made the Holy City their home, to be at least for the most part from Galilee. Provincials, notoriously rough and usually of little culture, were men most unlikely to be acquainted with foreign idioms. The name 'Galilean' is used here strictly in a geographical sense. It was not until a later period that the followers of Jesus of Nazareth were styled reproachfully, *Galileans*.

Ver. 8. In our own tongue, wherein we were born. Foreign Jews had long lost their acquaintance with Hebrew and its various dialects. The translation of the LXX. bore witness to the wide diffusion of the 'Greek' language among the chosen people, who, born and brought up in distant lands, were utterly ignorant of Hebrew. At Jerusalem at this time there were separate synagogues where various languages were used in the services, and to these the foreign Jews resident in the city used to resort (see chap. vi. 9).

*List of Nations to whom the Strangers belonged, who heard the Disciples speak in their own Languages.*

The catalogue contains the names of fifteen nations, in each of which a different language was spoken. In some few instances (as in Parthia, Media, Elam), different dialects, for all practical purposes, ranked as distinct languages. These countries, from various causes, had become the principal residences of the dispersed Jewish nation. The list seems roughly to follow a certain geographical plan, which proceeds from the north-east to north-west, then to the south, and lastly, to the west. But this plan is not adhered to in all cases, for the last two names are independent of any such arrangement. The names, of course, never formed part of the words uttered by the astonished crowd gathered round the house where the miracle had taken place, but were added by St. Luke when he finally revised the 'Acts.'

Ver. 9. Parthians, Medes, Elamites. In the Persian kingdom. It was among these peoples that Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, settled the captive ten tribes.

**Mesopotamia.** The country lying between the river Tigris and the river Euphrates. Here the Jewish captives were left by Nebuchadnezzar.

**Judea.** The occurrence of this name has occasioned some difficulty. Various emendations have been suggested, but they are purely conjectural, the MS. authority for 'Judea' being decisive. Idumæa, India, Bithynia, have been proposed. Tertullian and Augustine read 'Armenia.' But after all, there is no real difficulty. 'Judea' appears in the catalogue of nations as the representative of 'Aramaic,' because St. Luke desired to enumerate all the languages spoken that day by the disciples on whom the Spirit had fallen.

**Cappadocia.** Then a Roman province.

**Pontus**, on the Euxine, became a Roman province soon afterwards, in the reign of Nero. It was, when Luke wrote, governed by chiefs dependent on the empire.

**Asia** 'includes the whole west coast provinces of Asia Minor, Caria, Lydia, Mysia' (Meyer). It was one of the richest of the Roman provinces; its capital was Ephesus.

**Ver. 10. Phrygia** lay on the east of 'Asia,' but the greater part of it was then reckoned in that great province.

**Pamphylia**, a small division extending along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, was a tributary district. From these five provinces of Asia Minor St. Luke passes to the south.

**Egypt.** The vast numbers of Jewish residents in Egypt had necessitated the translation of the Hebrew Scriptures into a language they could understand. The Greek Version prepared for them was known as the Septuagint. Owing to the numbers who used it, it acquired a peculiar authority, and was revered as almost an inspired translation. Two-fifths of the population of the great city Alexandria were said to have been Jews. They had an ethnarch of their own.

**The parts of Libya about Cyrene.** Libya lay to the west of Egypt. Cyrene was a large city of Libya, where the Jews, says Strabo (in *Josephus*), amounted to a fourth part of the whole population. The Jews of Cyrene were so numerous in Jerusalem that they had a special synagogue of their own (Acts vi. 9). Simon, who bore the Saviour's cross at Golgotha, was a Cyrenian.

**Strangers from Rome.** Roman Jews who had made their home at Jerusalem, some as pilgrims, some as permanent residents. These were, no doubt, a Latin-speaking people. Tacitus speaks of the great number of Jews dwelling in Rome as exciting the jealousy of the government.

**Jews and proselytes.** This has reference not merely to the Romans last named, but to all the countries contained in the catalogue. It divides the various foreign hearers of the disciples' inspired words into two classes—Jews by birth, and proselyte converts from heathenism.

**Ver. 11. Cretes and Arabians.** In Crete the Jews were very numerous. Arabia, bordering on the Holy Land, of course counted among its inhabitants many Israelites. No sufficient reason, however, can be assigned for these two names occurring *at the end* of the list. Hackett considers them 'an after-thought' of the apostle. Some reason, doubtless, of which we are ignorant, moved St. Luke to place them in their present position in the catalogue. No various readings here give us any clue to the solution of the difficulty. Ewald calls attention to the omission of 'Syria' from the catalogue. Jerome reads 'Syria' instead of 'Judea' (ver. 9). The apparent omission can be explained by concluding that the Syrian strangers spoke and understood 'Aramaic' or 'Greek,' in both of which tongues some of the inspired ones addressed the bystanders.

**The wonderful works of God.** We can imagine the glorious exposition of the Spirit to these children of Israel, to these converts to Judaism from many lands and strange peoples, which, in words sweeter and wiser than man had ever listened to before, described the grand mission of Israel, which was, to keep the torch of the knowledge of God ever burning through long centuries in a great heathen world; and this, in spite of sin

and error, bitterly punished, had been done. And from the mission of Israel, now ended, we can conceive the Spirit passing and telling out to the awe-struck, entranced listeners the story of 'the wonderful works of God' done and purposed to be done in Christ the Messiah, speaking of the blood of Jesus which shall wash away all sin of Jew and Gentile. Surely we may assume that in some of these Pentecostal utterances, at least, the outlines of the arguments of the great epistles (to the Romans and Hebrews, for instance) were first sketched out.

**Vers. 12, 13. And they were all amazed . . . Others mocking, said, These men are full of new wine.** The effect of the Pentecost miracle was twofold. Some were convinced, some became inquirers. We read later, that three thousand were baptized (first-fruits of the Pentecostal miracle) that very day; while others, without pausing to consider *whence* these comparatively illiterate Galileans had drawn their strange new powers of language and of thought, in their blind hatred of Jesus of Nazareth, His doctrine and His disciples, at once ascribed the passionate earnestness of the 'inspired' to drunkenness. These hostile men, who so bitterly refused to hear, no doubt belonged to the priestly party in Jerusalem, which had compassed the murder of the Holy One and Just.

**Sweet wine.** This wine was probably that produced from dried grapes, by soaking them in old wine and then pressing them a second time (comp. Jahn, quoted by Hackett). This wine was very intoxicating.

#### *St. Peter's First Discourse, 14-36.*

No doubt the few discourses St. Luke has given us in the 'Acts,' represent faithfully the various characteristic features of early apostolic preaching. They are studiously simple: the arguments brought forward are carefully chosen with due regard to the audiences the preacher was addressing. They usually contain several guiding thoughts connected with the sacrifice and death of Christ. In most cases, whatever is advanced is supported by reference to Old Testament prophecies and statements;—we use the word 'support' advisedly, for in these famous sermons the Christian leaders of the first days never *base* their assertions merely on prophetic utterances. These are used constantly, however, as powerful and weighty collateral evidence to the truth of the preacher's words.

The discourse of St. Peter here falls most naturally into three portions:—

(a) **Vers. 14-21.** The inspired ones whose strange, beautiful words they had been listening to, were not drunken, as some of them were exclaiming. Had not one of their own prophets (Joel) prophesied such an outpouring of the Spirit in the last days as this they had just witnessed? Did he not conclude his prophecy by bidding whosoever would be saved to call on the name of the Lord?

(b) **Vers. 22-28.** And *the Lord*, the prophet referred to, was Jesus, who, approved by God as Messiah by His works, was yet murdered by the very people He came to save, who was now risen from the dead. Of this very death, and of the impossibility of death being able to hold such a holy Being, David in well-known words has written in his Psalms.

(c) **Vers. 29-36.** They were not to think David was referring to himself when he wrote these

things. He was dead, and they all knew *his* tomb. The One of whom he wrote, that no death could hold, was Jesus, who, having burst the bands of the grave, and having been exalted to the right hand of God, poured out *this* which they then saw and heard. No, they must not think David was referring to himself, for he wrote of One whom he called his (David's) Lord. Assuredly the 'Exalted One' of the Psalms of David was no other than Jesus the crucified.

*First Division of the Discourse, 14-21.*

What they heard was no effect of drunkenness, but the long prophesied outpouring of the Spirit.

Ver. 14. **But Peter, standing up with the eleven, lifted up his voice.** St. Augustine well calls attention to the marked change in St. Peter now that the Holy Ghost had been poured into his heart in so copious a stream of grace. 'More eagerly than the rest, he rushes forth to bear witness of Christ, and to confound his adversaries with the doctrine of the resurrection. . . . The same Peter, for whom we had wept when denying Christ, is seen and admired preaching Him. . . . That tongue, which at the sound of one was driven to denial, now inspires many thousand enemies to confess Christ. This was the work of the Holy Spirit' (St. Augustine in Ps. xcii.).

**With the eleven.** 'It is probable that the eleven spoke also to several companies of persons in various languages, and that St. Peter's speech was recorded as a *specimen* of what was spoken by the apostles' (Wordsworth).

Ver. 15. **These are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day.** The division of the day into twelve hours seems to have come into general use among the Jews during the captivity at Babylon. It is first mentioned by Daniel. The third hour here alluded to was about nine in the morning. It was the first of the three stated hours of prayer, the other two being noon, the sixth hour, and the ninth hour, when the evening sacrifice was offered. On Sabbath days and festivals, it was unusual for the Jews to eat or drink until the hour of morning prayer had expired; hence the extreme improbability of these many persons being already drunk at such an early hour of the day, and that day, too, a high festival, when it was not the custom even to touch food or drink till later.

Ver. 16. **This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel.** *This*, namely, the wonderful utterances of praise, the crowds from so many nations had been just listening to. The quotation, with a few unimportant variations (which will be noticed in their places), is from the LXX., Joel iii. 1-5, Hebrew, ii. 28-30. The passage from Joel is describing the signs which were to herald the beginning of the Messianic period, 'the last days of the world's history.'

Ver. 17. **In the last days.** The LXX. here reads *μὲτὰ ταῦτα*, *after these things*. The great Jewish commentator Rabbi D. Kimchi says these two expressions mean the same thing. 'And it shall be after these things,' is the same as, 'And it shall be in the last days' (R. D. Kimchi in Lightfoot, *Horæ Heb.*, quoted by Gloag). The expression, 'The last days,' was used by the Rabbis for that period of time which extends from the coming of the Messiah to the end of the world. (Thus it signifies, This age or period we live in now.) The age of Messiah is so termed in 1 John ii. 18: 'Little

children, it is the last time.' St. Paul also uses the same term, 2 Tim. iii. 1; Heb. i. 2.

**I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh, and they shall prophesy.** This prophecy received a partial and perhaps a special fulfilment on that Pentecost morning; but the reference extends far beyond that solemn time—over a multitude, too, widely different from those few inspired ones. Joel, when he first uttered the wondrous words, grasped a part, but only a part of their meaning, for his vision was bounded by the chosen race. He conceived a time when the Spirit of the Lord should descend on no priestly or prophet caste merely, but on every faithful and true Israelite. St. Peter, taught by the Spirit, saw the grand prophecy was being then fulfilled, and dimly caught sight of something of the true meaning of 'the Spirit being poured out on all flesh.' It was his first preparation for the great work of his noble life—the admission of the vast Gentile world to an equal share in the covenant promises. At no distant date, St. Peter was to declare how Jew and Gentile were to be alike heirs of the kingdom.

**And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy.** This part of the famous prediction of Joel was amply fulfilled by the extraordinary manifestations of the Spirit in the age of the apostles. Compare such passages as Acts xxi. 9, which speaks of the four virgin daughters of Philip 'which did prophesy,' and xxi. 10, where Agabus, *a certain prophet*, came to Paul; and see especially, 1 Cor. xiv., which discusses spiritual gifts in such terms as plainly show how widely diffused was this gift of prophecy at that eventful epoch; and compare also 1 Tim. i. 18.

**Your young men shall see visions.** Such as Stephen saw in the judgment-hall at Jerusalem (Acts vii. 55), and St. Peter on the house-top by the seaside at Joppa (Acts x. 10), and St. Paul on the Damascus road (Acts ix. 3) and in the Temple (Acts xxii. 17).

**Your old men shall dream dreams.** As perhaps John when in the Spirit on the Lord's day at Patmos (Rev. i. 10).

Ver. 18. **And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit.** This has been understood as a reference to the number of slaves and persons of the lowest rank who became Christians, and suffered and endured such great things for the sake of Jesus during the first age of the Church. Upon even these poor suffering outcasts of society would He pour His Spirit and confer His wondrous gifts.

The Hebrew original, taken by itself, would bear out this interpretation; but the LXX., from which St. Peter quotes, shows the real meaning of the passage when it inserts *μου* (*my*) before the words servants and handmaidens. It is no mere slave class which is spoken of here; it is but a solemn repetition of ver. 17. The Spirit was indeed to be poured on men and women, but on men and women who were true servants and handmaidens of the great Master.

Vers. 19, 20. **And I will show wonders in heaven above, and signs in the earth beneath; blood, fire, and vapour of smoke . . . before that great and notable day of the Lord come.** The Messianic dispensation, however, has two aspects—the one characterized by grace and mercy, the other by judgment and punishment. Now vers. 17 and 18 dwelt, as we have seen, on the glorious blessings which should be poured on

those who should acknowledge Christ; vers. 19 and 20 in plain terms tell of the awful punishment which awaits those who should deliberately reject Him. Pentecost and its great miracle—the signal outpouring of grace and power on the early Christian Church—was a *partial* fulfilment of vers. 17 and 18—the *prophecy of the blessing*; while the fall of the city, the unsurpassed misery and horror which attended the siege of Jerusalem, and the concluding period of the last Jewish war with Rome, and its crushing result, was equally a *partial* fulfilment of vers. 19 and 20—the *prophecy of the curse*.

But neither Pentecost and the miraculous powers bestowed on the early Church on the one hand, nor the fatal siege and deadly war on the other hand, has exhausted the great prophecy of Joel which St. Peter took up and repeated. The fulfilment began surely on the Pentecost morning. It was strangely carried out during those years of the Church's early powers. Its words, which tell of suffering and of woe, were lit up with the lurid light of the burning city and temple. But though both the blessing and the curse have received each of them a marked fulfilment, they were but partial ones; the full accomplishment still tarries and will assuredly precede that awful day of the Lord, the time of which is known to the Father only.

Ver. 21. *And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.* St. Peter here winds up the first division of his discourse, turning from theology to life, telling men and women of all races and ages the name of Him who could save them in all and through all, if they would only call upon Him.

*Second Division of St. Peter's Discourse, 22–28.*

St. Peter declares the NAME of that Lord who will save all the children of men who choose to call upon Him.

Ver. 22. *Jesus of Nazareth.* The words 'of Nazareth' are added as His usual designation among the Jews, the name 'Jesus' not being an uncommon one. It was the title affixed to the cross.

A man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs. That is, a man divinely accredited as Messiah by His wonderful works. Gloag well quotes Nicodemus' argument from John iii. 2: 'We know that Thou art a Teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that Thou doest, except God be with him.'

Ver. 23. *Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God.* This was not man's work, St. Peter says; but all this was done strictly in accordance with God's own design—all had been settled, had been foreseen by Him.

*Foreknowledge of God.* This indirectly appeals for support to the Old Testament prophecies which, with an awful minuteness, had described the very details of the tragedy of Calvary (see such passages as Isa. lii. 13–15, and liii., and Zech. xi. 12, 13, xii. 10, xiii. 7).

*Ye have taken.* There could have been no public condemnation and crucifixion of Christ, had not the PEOPLE acquiesced, some passively, some even with noisy approval, in their rulers' stern decision to get rid at all hazards of the hated reformer whom they feared with a strange and nameless terror. The Roman magistrate was quite indifferent, rather indisposed to proceed

to extremities with this poor winning Jewish Teacher. He would, no doubt, gladly have dismissed the accusation of the priestly party, had not the PEOPLE shown by their behaviour, that in this case condemnation would be a popular act; and doubtless some of the very men who, perhaps without much thought, had joined in swelling the cruel shout, '*Crucify Him*,' were among that Pentecost crowd listening to Peter (see Ewald, who has a good note here).

*By wicked hands have crucified and slain.* More accurately rendered, 'By lawless hands,'—that is, through the instrumentality of Pilate and the Roman soldiers employed in the crucifixion. But these lawless hands were only instruments, almost unconscious ones, by means of which the deed was done. The guilt of it is *yours*.

Ver. 24. *Whom God hath raised up.* 'Resurrection.' Peter had been leading up all the time to this great fact—the resurrection of Jesus; the remainder of his discourse (thirteen verses) dwells exclusively on this theme. So much hung on it. (1) It was the centre of that grand redemption scheme Peter and others were beginning to catch faint dim glimpses of. The Lord whom they had known on earth, was indeed risen from the dead and was ruling from His throne. (2) It was the pledge of man's immortality. Dimly, as through a glass darkly, the leading spirits of Israel, as we shall see in David's Psalm, looked on to an endless life with that God who loved them and held with them such intimate sweet communion; but the resurrection of Jesus, in the eyes of His first preacher, chased away all the mist and darkness which hung over the future, *for they had seen one like themselves die, had seen Him again, risen from the dead.*

*Having loosed the pains of death.* A good deal of difficulty has been raised here on the question of the apparent inaccuracy of the LXX. rendering of an expression in Ps. cxvi. 3. The Hebrew words, which probably St. Peter used on this occasion, חַבְלֵי מוֹת, would signify *cords* (or bands) *of death*. St. Luke, in his report of the speech, gives the LXX. equivalent, *τὰς ὀδύνας τοῦ θανάτου*, *pains of death*. Though the figure used would be somewhat altered if the original sense of the Hebrew had been preserved, yet the real meaning of the passage would remain the same. The meaning of the expression 'pains of death,' here spoken of as endured by Jesus, would seem to be, that death was regarded as a painful condition, because the body was threatened with corruption, and that consequently these pains were loosed when the body was raised and delivered from corruption (comp. Lechler); or in other words, 'the pains of death' do not cease when life departs: they follow the body into the grave; but in the case of Jesus, these pains of death—corruption—were loosed, for God raised Him up.

*Because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.* Death could have no real power over the Holy One, who is deathless, as the voice of God has plainly shown in the words of the following Psalm (xvi.) quoted verbatim from the LXX.

Ver. 25. *For David speaketh concerning him.* To show it was no new idea of his, that death could not hold the 'Holy One of God,' St. Peter quotes the words of Ps. xvi., where David writes of the sure hope of a joyous future life with



God. This sure hope of immortality is the spirit of the Psalm; but as St. Peter shows (and also St. Paul, Acts xiii. 36), the first and primary instance of one entering into eternal life must be sought in the person of one so raised from the dead before corruption could seize upon the dead one's body. This is what happened to Peter's crucified Master: therefore it was of Him that the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David wrote.

**I foresaw the Lord always before my face.** 'I foresaw' signifies simply, 'I saw the Lord always before me.'

**Ver. 26. Therefore did my heart rejoice.** These words describe Messiah's glad consciousness on earth of His oneness with the Father; for an expression of this, compare the words of Jesus on the occasion of the raising of Lazarus (St. John xi. 42), 'I know that Thou hearest me always.'

**And my tongue was glad.** *וְלִשְׁתִּי שִׂמְחָה*, LXX. The Hebrew has *בְּכֹדִי*, *my glory* (that is, *my*

*soul*), whose pre-eminent dignity in man the Hebrews recognised by this paraphrase. Wordsworth remarks that this paraphrase of the LXX. of 'my glory' by 'my tongue,' was very appropriate on that day of Pentecost, when, in a special manner, the tongues of the apostles were made instruments for declaring God's glory in the world.

**Moreover also my flesh shall rest in hope.** Christ expresses His confidence that His very flesh would rest *in the grave* in sure and confident hope. The ground of this hope appears in the next verse.

**Ver. 27. Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell.** This was the Redeemer's sure confidence during the days of His earthly life. It may, if we will, be *ours* too; for after a little while the joyful



The Sepulchre of David.

resurrection of the Lord, of body as well as soul, will be the inheritance of all holy and humble men of heart. His soul was not to remain in the realm of the dead. Hell, the well-known English translation of *גֵּהֶנֶם*, the Hebrew *גֵּהֶנֶם*, is singularly

unfortunate, as the word (Greek and Hebrew) simply means 'the abode where the souls of the dead dwell' after body and soul are separated by death. In this realm will remain until the resurrection morning, the souls both of the righteous and the wicked though widely separate—the one, however, dwelling in the regions of the blessed; the other, in those of the unhappy lost ones, waiting in fear for judgment.

**Neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.** The Beloved One of God was not to moulder in the grave, was not to share in that part of the curse of Adam which told man he should return to dust.

**Ver. 28. Thou hast made known to me the ways of life.** The thoughts of the Redeemer on earth are still being expressed. To Him in His

deep humiliation were made known by the Father those mysterious ways which lead through death to life. He knew when He had endured the pain and agony of the cross, when He had tasted the bitterness of death in all its fulness, death would be powerless to hold Him. The ways of life to Him meant the resurrection and the ascension.

**Thou shalt make me full of joy with thy countenance.** The heart of man cannot realise that joy in all its depth and fulness, when to the glory which the Only-begotten had with the Father before the world was, was added the glory of the world's redemption. It was for that 'joy which was set before Him, that He endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God' (Heb. xii. 2).

*Third Division of St. Peter's Discourse, 29-36.*

The preacher shows that that great Psalm which he has used as a bulwark of his argument respecting Messiah, could not by any possibility refer to David, or in fact to any one but Jesus.

**Ver. 29. Let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David.** Freely ('frei und offen,'

Meyer and Ewald), without fear of being thought unjust to the great memory of the royal patriarch, the founder of the kingly house of Judah.

**That he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us.** This was a notorious fact. No one ever pretended that King David had risen; his tomb all knew. We have a mention of the sepulchre of David on the return of Judah from Babylon (Neh. iii. 16). His resting-place was violated by the high priest, John Hyrcanus, and also by Herod the Great. The first found a treasure of money, the second some gold furniture in it. Jerome (end of 4th century) tells us that the tomb was visited in his day.

Ver. 30. **Therefore being a prophet.** 'In the stricter sense, a foreteller of future events by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit' (Alford). Jesus Himself expressly speaks of David writing 'in the Spirit' (Matt. xxii. 43).

**And knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne.** The words of the prophet Nathan to King David are here referred to (2 Sam. vii. 12, 13). In Ps. cxxiii. 11, 12, this solemn promise of the Most High is expressly referred to. It is, of course, impossible to say what was David's exact idea of this great One who was to descend from him. From the words of Nathan's prophecy, he must have gathered that no *mere man* among his descendants could ever establish the throne of his kingdom *for ever* (2 Sam. vii. 13), or sit upon his throne *for evermore* (Ps. cxxiii. 12). We may conclude with certainty that the psalmist king did connect that descendant of his, of whom he spoke 'in the Spirit' in such strange grand terms, with the idea of the Messiah.

Ver. 31. **He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither did his flesh see corruption.** David as a seer looking (*επιθεωρῶν*) into the far future, wrote of this great Descendant of his—of whom the prophet Nathan had spoken as establishing the throne of his kingdom *for ever*—as One who should die and yet should not see corruption, for He should be raised from the dead.

Ver. 32. **This Jesus hath God raised up.** Looking back to ver. 24, this Jesus—whom you all knew about so well—as David's descendant has fulfilled all the varied details of this marvellous prophecy; for as *you* know He was dead, He is risen again.

**Whereof we are all witnesses.** No doubt here pointing to the 'hundred and twenty' on whom the gift of the Spirit had fallen, who, to the astonishment of the crowds, had been speaking in the many tongues, and who all *had seen the Lord* after the resurrection.

Ver. 33. **Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted.** Render instead, **Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God.** The quotation from the prophecy of Ps. xvi., which related in so strangely an accurate way Messiah's calm, joyful confidence that death should have no abiding power over either flesh or soul, broke short off, it will be remembered, in the middle of the 11th verse of the Psalm, with a general expression of joy in the presence of the Father. St. Peter now having spoken of his Master's resurrection and of the literal fulfilment of the prophecy respecting death being powerless to hold Him, takes up as it were the interrupted thread in the Psalm, and

proceeds to speak of the exaltation of Messiah at the right hand of God where the Psalm leaves the 'Holy One' enthroned.

**And having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.** From His mediatorial throne at the right hand of God, Christ poured out the Spirit, said St. Peter, on these, as ye now see, just as He promised His own when He was with them on earth (comp. John xiv. 16, 17, xv. 26, xvi. 7, and Acts i. 4).

On the question of the translation 'to the right hand,' this construction of a verb of motion with the dative *τῷ δεξιᾷ* . . . *ὁψομένης* is found in classical writers only among the poets, though such a usage occurs in later writers. The undoubted connection with the concluding words of the great prophecy of Ps. xvi. (see Ewald's masterly paraphrase of the whole passage), leads us without hesitation to adopt this rendering in preference to the usual translation 'by the right hand,' with many of the best of the modern commentators, Neander, Olshausen, De Wette, Hackett, Wordsworth, etc.

Vers. 34, 35. **For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, until I make thy foes thy footstool.** The preacher, here fearful lest any should still suspect that King David was the One spoken of throughout the great passage he had been quoting, as a climax to his argument quotes King David's own words from the 110th Psalm, where the psalmist king speaks more clearly and fully (than in Ps. xvi.) about the throne at God's right hand, and by his plain unmistakeable words for ever sets aside all idea that in the famous passage of the 16th Psalm he was writing of himself, for he identifies the One who should sit at the right hand of the Eternal as *his Lord* (ver. 1), as the *looked-for Messiah* (vers. 1-7).

The 110th Psalm is quoted by the Lord Jesus (Matt. xxii. 43; Mark xii. 36). 'The Saviour recognises David as the author of the Psalm, and attributes to him a divine inspiration in speaking thus of the Messiah' (Hackett).

On the question of Christ sitting at the right hand of God, Dr. Hackett quotes from Prof. Stuart, who remarks: 'In the New Testament where Christ is represented as sitting on the right hand of Divine Majesty (Heb. i. 3), or at the right hand of God (Acts ii. 23, and Heb. x. 12), or at the right hand of the throne of God (Heb. xii. 2), participation in supreme dominion is most clearly meant' (comp. 1 Pet. iii. 22; Rom. viii. 34; Mark xvi. 19; Phil. ii. 6-11; Eph. i. 20-23).

Ver. 36. **Let all the house of Israel know assuredly.** Conclusion of the discourse. The whole of this first apostolic sermon was addressed to *Jews*. St. Peter in his argument lays little stress on the miracles of the Lord. He only alludes to them in passing, and argues alone from fulfilled prophecy, with which a Jew would be familiar. He showed from a passage in Joel, well known to his listeners, that the outpouring of the Spirit and its results, which they had just witnessed, was exactly what was foretold for the days of the Messiah. He then proceeded to point out that his Master, who had died and risen again, had fulfilled in every particular the strange prophecies contained in two famous Messianic Psalms.

God hath made that same Jesus . . . Lord and Christ. God hath made Him 'Lord of all' (Acts x. 36) by exalting Him to His right hand, and 'Christ' (the Greek equivalent for the Hebrew 'Messiah,' the 'Anointed') the One whom Israel looked forward to as their Deliverer and Redeemer for time and eternity. Meyer and also Gloag well remark here, that whilst on earth Jesus was equally 'Lord and Christ,' but that then He was in the form of a servant, having emptied Himself of His power and glory, but by the resurrection and ascension was He openly declared to be so.

**Whom ye have crucified.** These words in the original Greek close the discourse. This glorious One, now reigning with all power from His throne at the right hand of God,—Messiah and King,—is no other than that Jesus *whom ye crucified*.

*Effect of the First Discourse of St. Peter, 37-41.*

'St. Luke here relates what was the fruit of the sermons, that we may know that the Holy Spirit was displayed not merely in the variety of tongues, but in the hearts too of those who heard' (Calvin).

Ver. 37. **Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart.** 'They' does not of necessity mean all who heard; but the sequel, which speaks of three thousand baptized, implies that a vast number of the hearers were affected.

For the first time since the crucifixion, when they shouted applause or stood passively by, the people repented them of their cruel deed. Then after all they had crucified the Messiah: would He from His throne in heaven take vengeance on His murderers?

**And said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?** In the bitter sorrow and deep regret of these men for what they had done or allowed to be done, the words of Zech. xii. 10 seem to have received a partial fulfilment: 'And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born.'

**Men and brethren.** This friendly, courteous address showed how already the people's hearts were moved. It was not so they had addressed them before St. Peter's sermon, when they contemptuously mocked them, and said, 'These men are full of new wine' (ver. 13).

Vers. 38-40. The exquisite tact and courtesy so marked in all the early Christian writings, and especially in the apostolic letters and sermons we possess, is very remarkable in this little *résumé* of the first great Christian address. St. Peter forbears all reproach, for they were fully conscious now of what they had done. He only now invited them to join the company of believers, for the glorious promises he had been telling them of were expressly made to them and their children.

**Repent.** The Greek word *μετανοέω* does not signify mere sorrow for sin, but it imports change of mind. Alford well puts it: 'Here the change (was to be) from thinking Jesus an impostor and scorning Him as one crucified, to being baptized in His name and looking to Him for remission of sins and the gift of the Spirit.'

Ver. 38. **Be baptized.** The rite of baptism was well known to the Jews: they used to baptize proselytes and their children.

**In the name of Jesus Christ.** Their belief in Jesus was the ground on which they were to be baptized (Meyer). Here only do we find the expression 'to be baptized *in* the name' (*ἐν*); in all other places it is '*into* the name' (*εἰς*), chap. viii. 16; Matt. xxviii. 19, etc.; and '*in* the name' (*ἐν*), chap. x. 48. It has been suggested (by De Wette and also Hackett) that the usual formula *into* (*εἰς*) has been avoided here for the sake of euphony, as *εἰς* occurs in the next clause (*εἰς ἄφεσιν*), 'for the remission.'

Ver. 39. **For the promise is unto you.** The promise contained in the prophecy of Joel, viz. the miraculous gifts and influences of the Spirit—a characteristic, as far as regards the miraculous gifts, of the first days of the age of Messiah.

**And to your children.** Hackett explains 'your children' as signifying 'your posterity'; better, however, with Alford to limit it 'to your little ones.'

**And to all that are afar off.** Three explanations of this are given—(a) Reference to place, to all the Jews who do not dwell in Jerusalem or the Holy Land—Hebrews and Hellenists. (b) Reference in point of time. The promise is not only to you but to your descendants far down the stream of time. (c) To the Gentiles. Of these, (c) is undoubtedly the one to be preferred, as the expression, an Old Testament one (Zech. vi. 15; Isa. xlix. 1, lvii. 19), is constantly used to describe the Gentiles. The rabbinic writers also employ it as synonymous with the heathen (Schöttgen quoted by Hackett); see also St. Paul, Eph. ii. 13, 17. The admission of the Gentiles into the Church of the future, although as a fact never contemplated with gratification by the exclusive Hebrew nation, was yet constantly taught with more or less distinctness by these prophets (see Micah iv. 1; Amos ix. 12; Isa. ii. 2, 3, etc.; comp. also the note on ver. 17).

**Even as many as the Lord our God shall call.** An expression like this, a recorded saying of an inspired apostle, leads to the certain conclusion that in the wise counsels of God *some* are called, while *others* are left out of the divine invitation. It is not for us to argue on the justice or wisdom of Him whose ways are not our ways, nor His thoughts our thoughts, when He deals as He pleases with His creatures. That such a course of action is strictly analogous to what we see of the distribution of health and life, power and means, among men, is too plain. One solemn lesson, however, lies on the surface. Awful is the responsibility which attaches itself to those whom the Lord our God shall call. Woe be to them if they neglect the blessed invitation. With the fate of those who are not called, *we* have nothing to do. Only we may rest assured that our God, who in His eternal wisdom has placed no choice before them, is a Master ever tender and loving.

Ver. 40. **With many other words.** 'The words cited appear to be the concluding and inclusive summary of St. Peter's many exhortations' (Alford).

**Save yourselves from this untoward generation.** This should be rendered (as *σώθητι* is passive): *Be ye saved* (by God), 'Lasset euch retten' (De Wette).

**From this untoward generation**—that is, from that wicked Jewish people who had filled up the

cup of their iniquity by the murder of the Holy One and Just, and who were doomed to destruction. The siege and utter ruin of Jerusalem, and the destruction of the whole Jewish polity, took place about thirty-seven years after the day on which these words were spoken. Compare our Lord's words, Luke ix. 41, ii. 29-32.

Ver. 41. **Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added to them about three thousand souls.** Several commentators remark here, that as during the course at least of that day three thousand persons received baptism, this great multitude could not have been *immersed*, especially in a city like Jerusalem, where the supply of water was not abundant. This first baptism probably was administered by sprinkling or pouring. It is noteworthy that on this occasion 'the baptized' could have received little or no instruction in the faith. In this case instruction must have followed baptism. Olshausen, quoted by Gloag, remarks, 'We may see it was not dogmas (as a preparation for baptism) upon which the apostles laid stress, but the disposition and bent of the mind.'

*The Church of the First Days in Jerusalem, 42-47.*

St. Luke gives us in these few verses a vivid and a beautiful picture of the beginnings of the faith. The believers were no mere handful of men and women now. A large proportion of the three thousand who had been baptized at Pentecost doubtless were dwellers in the city, and these now were constantly with the apostles, hearing from them what the Master had taught His own during His life on earth. Daily in the Temple observing carefully the old Jewish ritual, and then meeting together in the eventide, they would eat in common the evening meal, and would at its close repeat the solemn act of breaking bread He had instituted in memory of His death. And thus the fame of the new society spread abroad. Their simple, generous, God-fearing life; *the wonders and signs worked by the apostles*; the strange, touching revelations in the many languages at the Pentecost feast; and above all, the memories of that loving Teacher, so well known in Jerusalem,—His mysterious powers, His death, His resurrection, which was the central point of the teaching of the apostles,—worked on the minds of men, and daily fresh converts were added to the rapidly-growing church.

Ver. 42. **And they continued stedfastly.** The three thousand souls converted after the Pentecost feast. The *whole* church is not especially mentioned in ver. 44.

**In the apostles' doctrine.** Those who had just joined the little company of believers in Jesus naturally sought to know more and more of that Master they had learned to love. The teaching of the apostles would especially consist in rehearsing the sayings of Jesus and explaining the doctrines of the faith so far as they were at that time revealed to them.

**And fellowship.** This word should not be coupled with the apostles' doctrine, as in the Authorized Version; the rendering should be, 'and in fellowship' (*καὶ τῇ κοινωνίᾳ*).

Three significations have been proposed for this difficult word—(a) oneness of spirit, brotherhood one with the other; (b) distribution of money and food among the society; (c) communion in the sense of our communion, the Lord's Supper. Of

these, (c) would seem excluded, as this sense of the word does not appear to have prevailed before the fourth century; (a) and (b) are both admissible, but the use of the term in the sense of distribution of money or necessities among the poor in such passages as Rom. xv. 26, 2 Cor. viii. 4, and also Heb. xiii. 16, seems decisive for (b).

**And in breaking of bread.** Common consent refers this expression to the breaking of the bread in the Lord's Supper. At this time the Eucharist was preceded by an ordinary repast. There is no doubt these words refer to a meal taken in common by the brethren, accompanied by the celebration of the Eucharist, following here the example of the last supper of the Lord.

**And in prayer.** These would include the beautiful prayers and Psalms of the old Jewish ritual, together with new supplications adapted to the new dispensation, in which Jesus was invoked as King and God. See Acts viii. 60, ix. 6, xxii. 10.

Ver. 43. **And fear came upon every soul.** The general impression on the public mind. A feeling of awe was excited even among those who did not join the company of believers.

**And many wonders and signs were done by the apostles.** The healing of the lame man by Peter and John, related in the 3d chapter, is an instance of one of these.

Vers. 44, 45. The question of 'community of goods in the early Church' is discussed in Excursus (B) at the end of this chapter.

**And all that believed were together.** This means that they assembled together. There were probably, even at this early period, several places of assembly for the followers of Jesus at Jerusalem.

**And had all things common,** etc. There is no doubt but that this was an attempt to live as nearly as possible the life lived by Jesus and His disciples during the days of His ministry on earth, when literally they had all things common. In the Excursus (B) the limitations of this community of goods are fully considered. We must, however, bear in mind that this communism among the early Christians only existed at Jerusalem, and then was certainly not compulsory or universal even in the first days.

Ver. 46. **And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple.** The wisdom of the Church of the first days was conspicuously shown in their reverent love for the temple of their fathers. This no doubt, in no small degree contributed to their *having* (as we read in the next (47) verse) *favour with all the people*. They seemed from the first to have grasped the idea that Christianity as taught by Jesus was only the completion of true Judaism. They were therefore no separatists; they practised rigidly the rites and observances of the old national religion, only supplementing these in private with new prayers and hymns, and with a constant repetition of the sayings of their Master, daily breaking bread together in remembrance of His death and Passion. In distant lands, among great and splendid idol temples, in the midst of dissolute and careless peoples, the religion of the Crucified, unfettered by sacred or patriotic memories, rapidly developed, throwing off gradually but quickly the many restrictions which Judaism in its exclusive spirit presented to any wide and rapid development. Men like Paul and Apollos laid their rites and ordinances tenderly aside, never irreverently

perhaps even sorrowfully : but the Spirit led them at last to feel *these things had done their work*.

**And breaking bread from house to house.** The remark of Neander admirably explains these words. A single room would no longer contain the present number of converts (in Jerusalem). In addition to their daily resort to the Temple, they met in smaller companies at different places, where they received instruction from their different teachers, and prayed and sang together, and as members of a common family closed their meeting with a meal, at which bread and wine were distributed in memory of the Saviour's last supper with His disciples.

**With gladness.** The calm, serene cheerfulness of the early Christian, even in times of bitter persecution, was ever a subject of much remark. The intense fervour of the faith of these early converts caused them to regard with comparative indifference everything connected with this life ; indeed, the desire 'to depart and be with Christ' at times led these devoted confessors so recklessly to court death and agony as to call forth remonstrances from their more famous teachers.

**Ver. 47. Added to the church.** The balance of authorities is rather against admitting 'to the church' in the text. The sense of the passage, if the word be omitted, would remain unaltered. The word *ἐκκλησία*, *church*, is a favourite one with the author of the Acts. It occurs in this book (says Wordsworth) about twenty times.

**Such as should be saved.** The Greek word here, *οἱ σωτέροις*, should be rendered simply *the saved*—that is, those who were escaping day by day from the evil around them, and taking refuge in the Ark of the Church (Wordsworth). The English Version has been charged here with a strong Calvinistic bias, implying that those who were predestined to be saved were being brought gradually into the pale of salvation. It is, however, clear that no doctrinal prejudice was the source of the error here, as all the early English versions except that of Wicliffe have it.

#### EXCURSUS A. ON THE PENTECOSTAL MIRACLE.

On the day of Pentecost, the first part of the work of the divine Founder of the Christian Church was completed when the Holy Ghost was given by the Father to the 'hundred and twenty' gathered together in the name of Jesus. A special grace and power was doubtless conferred on those on whom the Spirit had descended ; but the *special* power then conferred was soon withdrawn from men, the grace then given remained for ever with the Church of Christ. The special grace *included* a certain power to work miracles—a power, though (comparatively speaking), rarely used even in the earliest times, and which was gradually withdrawn. In the Fathers, very few authenticated instances are given of miracles worked by men on whom the Spirit was not specially poured at Pentecost. The first leaders of the followers of the Crucified, owed to 'the Spirit' that high wisdom which enabled them to lay, with such rare skill, such generous devotion and true love, the first stories of the Christian faith. The Spirit, too, we may affirm, teaching them all things, bringing, too, all things which the Master had said, into their remembrance, guided them when they wrote those holy memoirs and letters men call the New Testament Scriptures. We are tempted to forget the

grander issues of the Pentecostal miracle in the special gift which seems to have been the first apparent result of the descent of the Spirit, the speaking with tongues ; but this was merely the expression of deep thankfulness, the glorious utterance of grateful hearts conscious of the mighty change wrought in them by the Spirit sent from heaven. This gift of tongues was one of the special miraculous powers bestowed at Pentecost on the 'hundred and twenty' disciples then assembled together, and seems to have been an ecstatic expression of thanks and praise to God. The speaker, rapt, though not losing all command of himself, not always fully conscious of what he was uttering, poured out his ecstatic stream of praise, thanking God for His glorious mighty works, in words, in a language not usually comprehended by the bystanders.

These utterances often needed an interpreter. At times the speaker, we know, interpreted for himself, but generally the gift of interpretation of these ecstatic sayings was bestowed on another. We are told one spoke (in tongues), and another interpreted. The miracle of the 'gift of tongues,' as described on that memorable Pentecost, really differed in few particulars from those strange manifestations of the Spirit St. Paul writes of in his First Corinthian Epistle. The 'tongues' in the Corinthian Church needed an interpreter, either the speaker himself or else some other inspired person, as the utterances were in a language not understood by the bystanders. At that 'Pentecost,' however, no such interpreter was needed. The inspired ones spoke then as the Spirit gave them utterance, in new languages certainly ; but on that occasion each new language was addressed to groups of pilgrims and travellers familiar with the sounds. Then we read how the Greek-speaking Jew heard one inspired man proclaiming the glorious words of his Saviour God in his own Greek. The strangers of Rome and Italy listened to another uttering the same praises in their familiar Latin. The eastern pilgrim caught the same strange, beautiful words of praise and thanksgiving spoken by others of that inspired company in the different oriental dialects they knew so well. In this particular only differs the 'gift of tongues' we read of on that first Pentecost after the Lord had risen, from the 'gift of tongues' spoken of at such length by St. Paul (1 Cor. xiv.). The first instance of this new and marvellous power needed no subsequent interpretation. The new language in which each utterance was conveyed on that occasion was comprehended by each group of listeners at once. We are led, then, to the conclusion that the gift of tongues was one of the special powers bestowed when the Spirit descended at Pentecost ; that it was by no means a permanent and abiding power with any one, but was used in those days when the revelation of the power of Christ came for the first time in all its awful truth upon the disciples, to enable them better to pour out their new song of praise and thanksgiving. These glorious thoughts seem to have been uttered *at times* in dialects known and familiar to some among the bystanders, as at this Pentecost ; at times the Spirit seems to have given them utterance in a language no one present understood : in that case needing an interpreter (1 Cor. xiv.). But it is utterly at variance with all early record to suppose this 'gift of tongues' was a power of speaking in various languages, to be used by the first

believers when they preached the Gospel in distant lands; for neither in the Acts nor the Epistles, nor in early ecclesiastical history, is any intimation given that the 'Twelve' or the 'hundred and twenty,' or any of the converts to Christianity during the first hundred years after the resurrection, were supernaturally endowed with power to preach the Gospel in different languages which they had never learned. On the contrary, the currently-received interpretation of Acts xiv. 11 points to St. Paul, 'who spoke with tongues more than all,' not understanding the dialect of Lycaonia. St. Jerome, too, tells us St. Paul was accompanied by Titus as an interpreter (Estius on 2 Cor. xi.); and Papias (Eusebius, *l. E. iii. 39*) writes of Peter as attended by Mark, who acted in a like capacity in the missionary journeys of that great apostle. In the early Fathers on the mysterious nature of the 'gift of tongues,' there is an almost total silence. To them evidently it was no mere power of speaking in various languages; it was something quite different, something they could not understand or explain, and which had evidently ceased when the first generation of believers had passed away. One famous inspired passage already quoted from the First Corinthian Epistle forbids any notion of this power being used for teaching purposes in their own congregation at home in Corinth, and totally excludes all idea of the 'tongues' as an instrument for missionary work among strange peoples abroad; for its chief characteristic is that it is unintelligible. The man speaks mysteries, prays, blesses, gives thanks in the Spirit, *but no one understands him*.

We have already called attention to the indisputable fact that the miraculous gifts of the first days,—bestowed on the Church for a definite purpose,—when the apostles and those who had learned Christ from their lips had passed away, were gradually but quickly withdrawn from men. And among these supernatural powers we can believe that the earliest withdrawn were those new tongues first heard in their strange sweetness, needing *then* no interpreter on that Pentecost morning—those tongues which during the birth-throes of Christianity gave utterance to the rapturous joy and thankfulness of the first believers. They were a power though which, if misused, might lead men to confusion, to feverish dreamings, to morbid imaginings, to a condition of thought which would utterly unfit men and women for the stern and earnest duties of their several callings; in a word, would lead to a life unreal and unhealthy. And so that chapter of sacred history which tells of these communings of men with the unseen, which speaks of those thrilling moments of rapt joy, of those sweet, unearthly utterances which now and again beautified with a beauty not of earth the lives of those brave witnesses who first set the example of giving up all for the love of Christ—that chapter was closed for ever, perhaps even before those 'hundred and twenty' and the generation who had listened to their words had fallen asleep in Jesus.

*The latter part of this Excursus is mainly taken from a paper contributed by one of the editors of this Commentary on the 'Acts' to the Bible Educator on the whole question of this miracle, and on some of its results. See also Professor Plumtre's exhaustive article, in Dr. Smith's Dictionary of the Bible, on the Gift of Tongues; also for a different view from that advocated above, compare Bishop Words-*

*worth's interesting comment on this passage of the 'Acts.' De Wette, Apostelgeschichte, pp. 23-36, ed. 1870, gives an able summary of the views of that school, which assumes that all accounts of miraculous interference are simply mythic.*

#### EXCURSUS B. ON THE QUESTION WHETHER 'COMMUNITY OF GOODS' WAS THE PRACTICE GENERALLY AMONG THE EARLY CHRISTIANS.

On first reading the little descriptive pictures of the Church of the first days by the writer of the Acts in chap. ii. 44, 45, iv. 32-35, it would appear as though the first believers *literally* carried out such charges of the Master as, 'Sell that ye have, and give alms; provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not' (Luke xii. 33), and, 'If thou wilt be perfect, go thy way and sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come and follow ME' (Matt. xix. 21). But, on careful examination of other early Christian records contained in these same 'Acts,' and in the Epistles of the New Testament, it will be quickly seen that this community of goods could not have been general, even in the little Jerusalem congregation, for (a) the story of the death of Ananias and Sapphira—an episode in the early Church which must have happened very soon after the Pentecost miracle—shows most clearly that this giving up of possessions into a common stock was no necessary condition of Christian membership. No rule of this nature existed in the early Church; no such apostolic injunction was ever hinted at. 'Whilst (thy possession) remained,' said St. Peter to Ananias, 'was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power?' Ananias might have retained any part of it he wished, and still have remained a member of the Jerusalem congregation. His sin, for which he was so terribly punished, consisted in his pretending to give more than he really had done. (b) Some fourteen years later (Acts xii. 12) we find Mary, the mother of John and Mark—evidently a person of consideration and authority in the Church—possessing a house of her own in the city. The action of the Jerusalem Church in the days immediately succeeding the ascension of the Lord in this matter of community of goods was no attempt to engraft on the new society any rigid ascetic rule of life, such as was practised by the Essene sect among the Jews. It was simply a loving, longing wish to continue with as little difference as possible the simple, self-denying, unworldly life which Jesus led with His disciples while on earth. It was an earnest striving to carry out to the letter such commands as we find in St. Luke xii. 33, of which commands the inspired wisdom of the apostles soon saw the necessity of teaching an enlarged interpretation. The community of goods among the early Christians, apparently exclusively confined to Jerusalem, was not universal even there, and with the fall and destruction of the city (A.D. 70), if not before, ceased to be a practice of any portion of the Christian Church.

The inspired teaching of the Epistles of the New Testament clearly shows us what was the view taken by men like St. James and St. Paul of this question of property. They evidently had no idea of a general sharing of possessions among Christians, and never publicly urged on their converts a renunciation of their rank or property; on the



contrary, they pressed home to all—poor and rich, bond and free—the duty of doing their best for their Master and their brother in that state of life in which they were placed by the providence of God. It is true that they urged everywhere on all orders and degrees of men, on Gentile as well as Jew, the severe high view of life instead of the low and self-indulgent one; yet they everywhere acknowledge and accept orders and degrees among men as the wise arrangements of Almighty God. Paul even declines to interfere with the relation of master and slave (Epistle to Philemon), preferring to leave the correction of this terrible exaggeration of class privilege to the inevitable action of the religion of Jesus on the hearts of men.

Whether Paul addresses one particular church (1 Cor. xvi. 2; 2 Cor. ix. 5-7), or a group of churches (Gal. ii. 10), or a prominent disciple (1 Tim. vi. 17, and Philemon), his teaching ever proceeds from the assumption that rich and poor, high-born and low-born, in their several positions, were reckoned among the congregations who believed in Jesus. Even the austere and ascetic James, who certainly witnessed and most probably shared in the primitive community of goods in the Jerusalem Church, repeatedly rebukes the rich and powerful, not for *possessing*, but for *misusing* wealth and position (James ii. 1-9, iv. 13-17, v. 1-5).

It is no baseless theory which sees as the result of this community of goods, existing so generally in the Jerusalem Church, the extreme distress which, as early as the year A.D. 43, prevailed among the Jerusalem Christians. In spite of the most generous exertions of 'the brethren' in Rome, in Greece, in Asia Minor, in Syria, this deep poverty seems to have continued to the last (that is, till A.D. 70, when the city was destroyed) in the mother Church of Christendom. Constant reference to the extreme poverty among the Jerusalem Christians occurs in the busy life of St. Paul (see Acts xi. 29, xxiv. 17; Gal. ii. 10; Rom. xv. 26; 1 Cor. xvi. 1; 2 Cor. viii. 4-14,

ix. 1-12). Nor is it improbable that the first great missionary leaders—men like Paul, and Barnabas, and Luke, guided as they were by the Holy Ghost—were deterred by the spectacle of helpless poverty presented by the Church of Jerusalem from sanctioning in other cities an enthusiasm which led men, through a desire of carrying out to the letter the self-denying commands of their Master, to throw up those grave and weighty responsibilities which accompany wealth and position, and thus to reduce themselves to a state of helpless dependence; for they saw in such a community all manly self-reliance, all generous effort, would, on the part of the individual, gradually cease to exist.

A deadly torpor, such as seems to have crept over and paralyzed the Jerusalem Christians, would by degrees have destroyed the energy of every Church whose members, by voluntarily renouncing rank and home and wealth, sought *literally* to fulfil their Lord's commands. Other ages have witnessed attempts more or less noble, even though mistaken, to revive the Jerusalem dream of a life where should exist no distinctions of 'order' and class, and where *literally* all things should be possessed in common; but every such attempt has failed; sometimes ending in wild disorder, sometimes producing a society whose life and aims seemed utterly at variance with the teaching and the mind of Christ. I need scarcely allude here to the vows of poverty and self-renunciation of the famous Franciscan order, and to the hopes of its generous and devoted founder, Francis of Assisi—vows, alas! too often broken; hopes, alas! cruelly deceived.

The estimate of Paul and his brother apostles was the true one; they judged rightly when they declined to interfere with the established order of things among civilised peoples, or to recognise in any way a state of society which, however beautiful in theory, in practice would effectually bar all progress, and which would only result in confusion and misery.

### CHAPTER III.

#### *The First Miracle of Peter and of John—The Second Sermon of Peter.*

- 1 **N**OW Peter and <sup>a</sup> John <sup>b</sup> went up together <sup>c</sup> into the temple <sup>d</sup> <sup>e</sup> <sup>f</sup> <sup>g</sup> <sup>h</sup> <sup>i</sup> <sup>j</sup> <sup>k</sup> <sup>l</sup> <sup>m</sup> <sup>n</sup> <sup>o</sup> <sup>p</sup> <sup>q</sup> <sup>r</sup> <sup>s</sup> <sup>t</sup> <sup>u</sup> <sup>v</sup> <sup>w</sup> <sup>x</sup> <sup>y</sup> <sup>z</sup> <sup>aa</sup> <sup>ab</sup> <sup>ac</sup> <sup>ad</sup> <sup>ae</sup> <sup>af</sup> <sup>ag</sup> <sup>ah</sup> <sup>ai</sup> <sup>aj</sup> <sup>ak</sup> <sup>al</sup> <sup>am</sup> <sup>an</sup> <sup>ao</sup> <sup>ap</sup> <sup>aq</sup> <sup>ar</sup> <sup>as</sup> <sup>at</sup> <sup>au</sup> <sup>av</sup> <sup>aw</sup> <sup>ax</sup> <sup>ay</sup> <sup>az</sup> <sup>ba</sup> <sup>bb</sup> <sup>bc</sup> <sup>bd</sup> <sup>be</sup> <sup>bf</sup> <sup>bg</sup> <sup>bh</sup> <sup>bi</sup> <sup>bj</sup> <sup>bk</sup> <sup>bl</sup> <sup>bm</sup> <sup>bn</sup> <sup>bo</sup> <sup>bp</sup> <sup>bq</sup> <sup>br</sup> <sup>bs</sup> <sup>bt</sup> <sup>bu</sup> <sup>bv</sup> <sup>bw</sup> <sup>bx</sup> <sup>by</sup> <sup>bz</sup> <sup>ca</sup> <sup>cb</sup> <sup>cc</sup> <sup>cd</sup> <sup>ce</sup> <sup>cf</sup> <sup>cg</sup> <sup>ch</sup> <sup>ci</sup> <sup>cj</sup> <sup>ck</sup> <sup>cl</sup> <sup>cm</sup> <sup>cn</sup> <sup>co</sup> <sup>cp</sup> <sup>cq</sup> <sup>cr</sup> <sup>cs</sup> <sup>ct</sup> <sup>cu</sup> <sup>cv</sup> <sup>cw</sup> <sup>cx</sup> <sup>cy</sup> <sup>cz</sup> <sup>da</sup> <sup>db</sup> <sup>dc</sup> <sup>dd</sup> <sup>de</sup> <sup>df</sup> <sup>dg</sup> <sup>dh</sup> <sup>di</sup> <sup>dj</sup> <sup>dk</sup> <sup>dl</sup> <sup>dm</sup> <sup>dn</sup> <sup>do</sup> <sup>dp</sup> <sup>dq</sup> <sup>dr</sup> <sup>ds</sup> <sup>dt</sup> <sup>du</sup> <sup>dv</sup> <sup>dw</sup> <sup>dx</sup> <sup>dy</sup> <sup>dz</sup> <sup>ea</sup> <sup>eb</sup> <sup>ec</sup> <sup>ed</sup> <sup>ee</sup> <sup>ef</sup> <sup>eg</sup> <sup>eh</sup> <sup>ei</sup> <sup>ej</sup> 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<sup>hd</sup> <sup>he</sup> <sup>hf</sup> <sup>hg</sup> <sup>hh</sup> <sup>hi</sup> <sup>hj</sup> <sup>hk</sup> <sup>hl</sup> <sup>hm</sup> <sup>hn</sup> <sup>ho</sup> <sup>hp</sup> <sup>hq</sup> <sup>hr</sup> <sup>hs</sup> <sup>ht</sup> <sup>hu</sup> <sup>hv</sup> <sup>hw</sup> <sup>hx</sup> <sup>hy</sup> <sup>hz</sup> <sup>ia</sup> <sup>ib</sup> <sup>ic</sup> <sup>id</sup> <sup>ie</sup> <sup>if</sup> <sup>ig</sup> <sup>ih</sup> <sup>ii</sup> <sup>ij</sup> <sup>ik</sup> <sup>il</sup> <sup>im</sup> <sup>in</sup> <sup>io</sup> <sup>ip</sup> <sup>iq</sup> <sup>ir</sup> <sup>is</sup> <sup>it</sup> <sup>iu</sup> <sup>iv</sup> <sup>iw</sup> <sup>ix</sup> <sup>iy</sup> <sup>iz</sup> <sup>ja</sup> <sup>jb</sup> <sup>jc</sup> <sup>jd</sup> <sup>je</sup> <sup>jf</sup> <sup>jj</sup> <sup>jk</sup> <sup>jl</sup> <sup>jm</sup> <sup>jn</sup> <sup>jo</sup> <sup>jp</sup> <sup>jq</sup> <sup>jr</sup> <sup>js</sup> <sup>jt</sup> <sup>ju</sup> <sup>jv</sup> <sup>jw</sup> <sup>jx</sup> <sup>ky</sup> <sup>kz</sup> <sup>la</sup> <sup>lb</sup> <sup>lc</sup> <sup>ld</sup> <sup>le</sup> <sup>lf</sup> <sup>lg</sup> <sup>lh</sup> <sup>li</sup> <sup>lj</sup> <sup>lk</sup> <sup>ll</sup> <sup>lm</sup> <sup>ln</sup> <sup>lo</sup> <sup>lp</sup> <sup>lq</sup> <sup>lr</sup> <sup>ls</sup> <sup>lt</sup> <sup>lu</sup> <sup>lv</sup> <sup>lw</sup> <sup>lx</sup> <sup>ly</sup> <sup>lz</sup> <sup>ma</sup> <sup>mb</sup> <sup>mc</sup> <sup>md</sup> <sup>me</sup> <sup>mf</sup> <sup>mg</sup> <sup>mh</sup> <sup>mi</sup> <sup>mj</sup> <sup>mk</sup> <sup>ml</sup> <sup>mm</sup> <sup>mn</sup> <sup>mo</sup> <sup>mp</sup> <sup>mq</sup> <sup>mr</sup> <sup>ms</sup> <sup>mt</sup> <sup>mu</sup> <sup>mv</sup> <sup>mw</sup> <sup>mx</sup> <sup>my</sup> <sup>mz</sup> <sup>na</sup> <sup>nb</sup> <sup>nc</sup> <sup>nd</sup> <sup>ne</sup> <sup>nf</sup> <sup>ng</sup> <sup>nh</sup> <sup>ni</sup> <sup>nj</sup> <sup>nk</sup> <sup>nl</sup> <sup>nm</sup> <sup>nn</sup> <sup>no</sup> <sup>np</sup> <sup>nq</sup> <sup>nr</sup> <sup>ns</sup> <sup>nt</sup> <sup>nu</sup> <sup>nv</sup> <sup>nw</sup> <sup>nx</sup> <sup>ny</sup> <sup>nz</sup> <sup>oa</sup> <sup>ob</sup> <sup>oc</sup> <sup>od</sup> <sup>oe</sup> <sup>of</sup> <sup>og</sup> <sup>oh</sup> <sup>oi</sup> <sup>oj</sup> <sup>ok</sup> <sup>ol</sup> <sup>om</sup> <sup>on</sup> <sup>oo</sup> <sup>op</sup> <sup>oq</sup> <sup>or</sup> <sup>os</sup> <sup>ot</sup> <sup>ou</sup> <sup>ov</sup> <sup>ow</sup> <sup>ox</sup> <sup>oy</sup> <sup>oz</sup> <sup>pa</sup> <sup>pb</sup> <sup>pc</sup> <sup>pd</sup> <sup>pe</sup> <sup>pf</sup> <sup>pg</sup> <sup>ph</sup> <sup>pi</sup> <sup>pj</sup> <sup>pk</sup> <sup>pl</sup> <sup>pm</sup> <sup>pn</sup> <sup>po</sup> <sup>pp</sup> <sup>pq</sup> <sup>pr</sup> <sup>ps</sup> <sup>pt</sup> <sup>pu</sup> <sup>pv</sup> <sup>pw</sup> <sup>px</sup> <sup>py</sup> <sup>pz</sup> <sup>qa</sup> <sup>qb</sup> <sup>qc</sup> <sup>qd</sup> <sup>qe</sup> <sup>qf</sup> <sup>qg</sup> <sup>qh</sup> <sup>qi</sup> <sup>qj</sup> <sup>qk</sup> <sup>ql</sup> <sup>qm</sup> <sup>qn</sup> <sup>qo</sup> <sup>qp</sup> <sup>qq</sup> <sup>qr</sup> <sup>qs</sup> <sup>qt</sup> <sup>qu</sup> <sup>qv</sup> <sup>qw</sup> <sup>qx</sup> <sup>qy</sup> <sup>qz</sup> <sup>ra</sup> <sup>rb</sup> <sup>rc</sup> <sup>rd</sup> <sup>re</sup> <sup>rf</sup> <sup>rg</sup> <sup>rh</sup> <sup>ri</sup> <sup>rj</sup> <sup>rk</sup> <sup>rl</sup> <sup>rm</sup> <sup>rn</sup> <sup>ro</sup> <sup>rp</sup> <sup>rq</sup> <sup>rr</sup> <sup>rs</sup> <sup>rt</sup> <sup>ru</sup> <sup>rv</sup> <sup>rw</sup> <sup>rx</sup> <sup>ry</sup> <sup>rz</sup> <sup>sa</sup> <sup>sb</sup> <sup>sc</sup> <sup>sd</sup> <sup>se</sup> <sup>sf</sup> <sup>sg</sup> <sup>sh</sup> <sup>si</sup> <sup>sj</sup> <sup>sk</sup> <sup>sl</sup> <sup>sm</sup> <sup>sn</sup> <sup>so</sup> <sup>sp</sup> <sup>sq</sup> <sup>sr</sup> <sup>ss</sup> <sup>st</sup> <sup>su</sup> <sup>sv</sup> <sup>sw</sup> <sup>sx</sup> <sup>sy</sup> <sup>sz</sup> <sup>ta</sup> <sup>tb</sup> <sup>tc</sup> <sup>td</sup> <sup>te</sup> <sup>tf</sup> <sup>tg</sup> <sup>th</sup> <sup>ti</sup> <sup>tj</sup> <sup>tk</sup> <sup>tl</sup> <sup>tm</sup> <sup>tn</sup> <sup>to</sup> <sup>tp</sup>  <sup>tq</sup> <sup>tr</sup> <sup>ts</sup> <sup>tt</sup> <sup>tu</sup> <sup>tv</sup> <sup>tw</sup> <sup>tx</sup> <sup>ty</sup> <sup>tz</sup> <sup>ua</sup> <sup>ub</sup> <sup>uc</sup> <sup>ud</sup> <sup>ue</sup> <sup>uf</sup> <sup>ug</sup> <sup>uh</sup> <sup>ui</sup> <sup>uj</sup> <sup>uk</sup> <sup>ul</sup> <sup>um</sup> <sup>un</sup> <sup>uo</sup> <sup>up</sup> <sup>uq</sup> <sup>ur</sup> <sup>us</sup> <sup>ut</sup> <sup>uu</sup> <sup>uv</sup> <sup>uw</sup> <sup>ux</sup> <sup>uy</sup> <sup>uz</sup> <sup>va</sup> <sup>vb</sup> <sup>vc</sup> <sup>vd</sup> <sup>ve</sup> <sup>vf</sup> <sup>vg</sup> <sup>vh</sup> <sup>vi</sup> <sup>vj</sup> <sup>vk</sup> <sup>vl</sup> <sup>vm</sup> <sup>vn</sup> <sup>vo</sup> <sup>vp</sup> <sup>vq</sup> <sup>vr</sup> <sup>vs</sup> <sup>vt</sup> <sup>vu</sup> <sup>vv</sup> <sup>vw</sup> <sup>vx</sup> <sup>vy</sup> <sup>vz</sup> <sup>wa</sup> <sup>wb</sup> <sup>wc</sup> <sup>wd</sup> <sup>we</sup> <sup>wf</sup> <sup>wg</sup> <sup>wh</sup> <sup>wi</sup> <sup>wj</sup> <sup>wk</sup> <sup>wl</sup> <sup>wm</sup> <sup>wn</sup> <sup>wo</sup> <sup>wp</sup> <sup>wq</sup> <sup>wr</sup> <sup>ws</sup> <sup>wt</sup> <sup>wu</sup> <sup>wv</sup> <sup>ww</sup> <sup>wx</sup> <sup>wy</sup> <sup>wz</sup> <sup>xa</sup> <sup>xb</sup> <sup>xc</sup> <sup>xd</sup> <sup>xe</sup> <sup>xf</sup> <sup>fg</sup> <sup>xh</sup> <sup>xi</sup> <sup>xj</sup> <sup>xk</sup> <sup>xl</sup> <sup>xm</sup> <sup>xn</sup> <sup>xo</sup> <sup>xp</sup> <sup>xq</sup> <sup>xr</sup> <sup>xs</sup> <sup>xt</sup> <sup>xu</sup> <sup>xv</sup> <sup>xw</sup> <sup>xx</sup> <sup>xy</sup> <sup>xz</sup> <sup>ya</sup> <sup>yb</sup> <sup>yc</sup> <sup>yd</sup> <sup>ye</sup> <sup>yf</sup> <sup>yg</sup> <sup>yh</sup> <sup>yi</sup> <sup>yj</sup> <sup>yk</sup> <sup>yl</sup> <sup>ym</sup> <sup>yn</sup> <sup>yo</sup> <sup>yp</sup> <sup>yq</sup> <sup>yr</sup> <sup>ys</sup> <sup>yt</sup> <sup>yu</sup> <sup>yv</sup> <sup>yw</sup> <sup>yx</sup> <sup>yy</sup> <sup>yz</sup> <sup>za</sup> <sup>zb</sup> <sup>zc</sup> <sup>zd</sup> <sup>ze</sup> <sup>zf</sup> <sup>zg</sup> <sup>zh</sup> <sup>zi</sup> <sup>zj</sup> <sup>zk</sup> <sup>zl</sup> <sup>zm</sup> <sup>zn</sup> <sup>zo</sup> <sup>zp</sup> <sup>zq</sup> <sup>zr</sup> <sup>zs</sup> <sup>zt</sup> <sup>zu</sup> <sup>zv</sup> <sup>zw</sup> <sup>zx</sup> <sup>zy</sup> <sup>zz</sup>

<sup>m</sup> Ch. iv. 10 (Gk.). So ver. 16; ch. iv. 30. Cp. ch. ix. 34.

<sup>1</sup> were going up together

<sup>3</sup> but what I have, that give I thee

<sup>2</sup> to receive an alms

- 7 name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up<sup>4</sup> and walk. And he took him by the right hand, and lifted *him* up: and immediately
- 8 his feet and ankle bones received strength, And he<sup>5</sup> leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple,
- 9 walking, and<sup>6</sup> leaping, and praising God. And<sup>7</sup> all the people saw him walking and praising God: And they<sup>8</sup> knew that it was he which<sup>9</sup> sat for alms at the Beautiful gate of the temple: and they were filled with wonder and amazement at that which had happened unto him.
- 11 And as the lame *man* which was healed<sup>10</sup> held Peter and John, all the people ran together unto them in<sup>11</sup> the porch that is called Solomon's, greatly wondering. And when Peter saw *it*, he<sup>12</sup> answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this?<sup>13</sup> or why<sup>14</sup> look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this *man* to walk?
- 13 The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob,<sup>15</sup> the God of our fathers, hath<sup>16</sup> glorified his Son Jesus;<sup>17</sup> whom ye<sup>18</sup> delivered up, and<sup>19</sup> denied him in the presence of Pilate,<sup>20</sup> when he was determined to<sup>21</sup> let *him* go. But ye denied<sup>22</sup> the Holy One and<sup>23</sup> the Just, and<sup>24</sup> desired a murderer to be<sup>25</sup> granted unto you; And killed the<sup>26</sup> Prince of<sup>27</sup> life, whom<sup>28</sup> God hath raised<sup>29</sup> from the dead; whereof we are<sup>30</sup> witnesses. And<sup>31</sup> his name<sup>32</sup> through faith in his name hath made this *man* strong, whom ye see and know: yea,<sup>33</sup> the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.
- 17 And now, brethren, I wot that<sup>34</sup> through ignorance ye did *it*, as *did* also your<sup>35</sup> rulers. But *those things*, which God<sup>36</sup> before had showed<sup>37</sup> by the mouth of all his prophets,<sup>38</sup> that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled. Repent ye therefore, and<sup>39</sup> be converted, that your sins<sup>40</sup> may be<sup>41</sup> blotted out, when the times of refreshing<sup>42</sup> shall come from the presence of the Lord;
- 20 And he shall send<sup>43</sup> Jesus Christ, which<sup>44</sup> before was preached unto you: Whom the heaven must receive until the times of<sup>45</sup> restitution<sup>46</sup> of all *things*, which<sup>47</sup> God hath spoken by the

<sup>4</sup> See Jo. iii. 1.<sup>5</sup> Ch. xvii. 3, xxvi. 22; 1 Pet. i. 10, 11. See Lu. xxiv. 27.<sup>6</sup> See Lu. xxii. 32.<sup>7</sup> Ch. i. 11.<sup>8</sup> Ver. 24 (Gk.). So ch. ii. 23, iv. 28.<sup>9</sup> Cp. Heb. ii. 10.<sup>10</sup> See Ps. li. 1.<sup>11</sup> See Mat. xvii. 11.<sup>12</sup> So ch. ii. 38.<sup>13</sup> Ver. 18.<sup>14</sup> See Lu. i. 70.<sup>15</sup> Isa. xxxv. 6;

ch. xiv. 10.

<sup>16</sup> Ch. iv. 16, 21.<sup>17</sup> Gk. as Mat.

xxv. 24, etc.

<sup>18</sup> Ch. iv. 14.<sup>19</sup> Jo. x. 23;

ch. v. 12.

<sup>20</sup> Ch. v. 8, x.

46. See

Judg. xviii.

<sup>21</sup> Ver. 4 (Gk.).

See Lu. iv.

<sup>22</sup> Rather as

2 Pet. i. 3,

6, 7.

<sup>23</sup> Ch. v. 30,

xxiii. 14.

<sup>24</sup> Isa. lv. 5;

Jo. vii. 39,

viii. 54 (Gk.),

xii. 16, xvi.

14, xvii. 1.

<sup>25</sup> Mat. xx. 19,

xxvii. 2;

Mk. xv. 1.

<sup>26</sup> Mat. xxvii.

30; Mk. xv.

11; Lu. xxiii.

18, 20, 21;

Jo. xviii. 40,

xix. 15;

ch. xiii. 28.

<sup>27</sup> So Lu. xxiii.

24, 16.

<sup>28</sup> See Lu. vi.

37.

<sup>29</sup> See Mk. i. 24.<sup>30</sup> So ch. iv. 27.<sup>31</sup> Ch. vii. 59,

xxii. 14;

<sup>32</sup> Jas. v. 6;

Jo. ii. 1.

<sup>33</sup> Lu. xxiii. 17,

18, 19, 25;

Cp. Jo. xix.

12, 13.

<sup>34</sup> See ch. xxv.

11.

<sup>35</sup> Ch. v. 31;

Heb. ii. 10

(Gk.).

<sup>36</sup> Jo. v. 11.<sup>37</sup> See ch. ii.

24.

<sup>38</sup> See Lu. xxiv.

48.

<sup>39</sup> So ver. 6.<sup>40</sup> See Mat. ix.

2.

<sup>41</sup> So Jo. xvi.

3; ch. xiii.

27; 1 Cor. ii.

8; Cp. 2

Cor. iii. 14.

<sup>42</sup> See 1

Tim. i. 13.

<sup>4</sup> some ancient authorities omit 'rise up'<sup>5</sup> all the older authorities omit the words 'the lame man which was healed.  
Text should read simply, 'And as he held'<sup>6</sup> why marvel ye at this man<sup>7</sup> whom God raised<sup>7</sup> his servant Jesus<sup>8</sup> which God foreshowed<sup>10</sup> Most ancient authorities read instead of 'his prophets' 'the prophets,' and instead of 'Christ' 'his Christ'<sup>11</sup> more literally 'and turn again, that your sins,' etc.<sup>12</sup> that so the times of refreshing<sup>13</sup> And that he may send<sup>14</sup> or the times of restoration



- 22 mouth of all his holy prophets <sup>7</sup> since the world began. For <sup>7</sup> See Lu. i. 70  
Moses truly said unto the fathers,<sup>15</sup> <sup>8</sup> A prophet shall the Lord <sup>8</sup> So Jo. ix. 32.  
your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; <sup>8</sup> Cited from  
<sup>8</sup> him shall ye hear in all *things* whatsoever he shall say unto <sup>8</sup> Deut. xviii.  
15. 19.  
23 you. And it shall come to pass, *that* every soul, which will not <sup>8</sup> Cited also  
hear that prophet, shall be destroyed <sup>16</sup> from among the people. <sup>8</sup> ch. vii. 37.  
24 Yea, and all the <sup>6</sup> prophets from <sup>6</sup> Samuel and those that follow <sup>8</sup> See Mat.  
after, as many as have spoken, have likewise <sup>9</sup> foretold <sup>17</sup> of <sup>8</sup> xvii. 5.  
25 these days. Ye are <sup>6</sup> the children <sup>18</sup> of the prophets, and of the <sup>8</sup> 1 Sam. iii.  
covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abra- <sup>8</sup> 20; ch. xiii.  
ham, <sup>4</sup> And in thy seed shall <sup>6</sup> all the kindreds of the earth be <sup>8</sup> 20; Heb. xi.  
26 <sup>4</sup> blessed. Unto you <sup>7</sup> first God, <sup>8</sup> having raised up his Son,<sup>19</sup> <sup>8</sup> 32.  
Jesus,<sup>20</sup> sent him to <sup>4</sup> bless you, in <sup>7</sup> turning away every one of <sup>8</sup> So Rom. ix.  
you from *his* iniquities. <sup>8</sup> 4; 5; xv. 8.  
<sup>8</sup> Cited from <sup>8</sup> ch. ii. 39.  
Gen. xxii. <sup>8</sup> Cited from  
18. <sup>8</sup> Gen. xxi. 3.  
So Eph. iii. <sup>8</sup> 16.  
Ch. xiii. 46;  
Rom. i. 16,  
ii. 9. So  
Mat. x. 5, 6,  
xv. 24; Lu.  
xiv. 47; ch.  
xiii. 26, 32,  
33.

<sup>g</sup> See ch. ii. 24.<sup>k</sup> Ver. 25.<sup>i</sup> Rom. xi. 26 So Mat. i. 21; ch. v. 31.<sup>15</sup> The words 'unto the fathers' do not occur in the older authorities.<sup>16</sup> shall be utterly destroyed<sup>17</sup> Instead of 'foretold' the ancient authorities read 'told.'<sup>18</sup> ye are the sons<sup>19</sup> having raised up his servant<sup>20</sup> Many of the ancient authorities omit 'Jesus.'

*Healing of the Lame Man by Peter and John at the Beautiful Gate of the Temple, 1-11.*

The writer of the 'Acts,' after describing the inner life of the new society, takes up the thread of the story again. He had spoken (ver. 46) of the daily attendance of the followers of Jesus in the Temple, and had mentioned the many signs and wonders which were being worked by the apostles (ver. 43); and now he gives in detail an account of one of their daily visits to the Temple, in the course of which the apostles happened to do one of those wondrous works referred to (ver. 43).

Ver. 1. **Peter and John went up together into the temple.** These two apostles are constantly mentioned as being together in the later portions of the Gospel, and the earlier ones of the 'Acts.' They were sent by Christ to prepare the upper room for the last Passover. They were most probably both present in the hall of Caiaphas. They both followed Christ (John xxi.) after His appearance by the sea of Tiberias. They are together here in the Temple. They are afterwards sent out together to confirm the Samaritan converts; but after chap. viii. 14, although, as Wordsworth remarks, St. Peter is mentioned in this book nearly forty times after the occurrence referred to (chap. viii.), St. John never appears again. Most likely St. John about that time ceased to be a resident in the Holy City.

**At the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour.** This was about three o'clock in the afternoon, the hour of the evening sacrifice. Of the three different hours of prayer, this was the favourite time for the Jews to go up to the Temple, as the busiest time in the day was over, and it happened just before the evening (the principal) meal of the day (see Ewald).

Ver. 2. **A certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the**

gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple. Martial (i. 112) tells us of beggars who were in the habit of sitting at the gate of heathen temples. Chrysostom recommends this practice as regards Christian charities. In the Roman Catholic churches on the Continent of Europe, one or more beggars, usually cripples, constantly sit in the church porch asking charity from all who enter.

**The temple.** A short description of the Temple as it appeared at the time of the crucifixion, will bring those events which are related in the 'Acts' as happening in the Temple, more vividly before our eyes. Solomon's 'House' had been completely destroyed in the Babylonian war; on the return from captivity, a second Temple was built. Herod the Great restored the second 'House' completely, and almost entirely rebuilt it; his successors went on with the work of adorning and beautifying for the period of about forty-six years referred to by John xi. 20. Outwards, and in its decorations within, it was perhaps not inferior to Solomon's 'House' (its moveable furniture and vessels were not wrought of the same costly materials), and at this time it was one of the most stately buildings in the world. The outward face of the Temple, looking at it from the Mount of Olives, as our Lord did that last week of His earthly life (Matt. xxiv.), 'wanted nothing that was likely to surprise men's minds or their eyes; for it was covered over with plates of gold, which, at the first rising of the sun, reflected back such a splendour as compelled those who forced themselves to look upon it to turn away their eyes, just as they would have done at the sun's rays. This Temple appeared to strangers, when they were at a distance, like a mountain covered with snow, for those parts of it which were not covered with gold were exceeding white' (Josephus, *Jud. Bell.* v. 5). This glorious 'House' in no way,

writes Glog, from whose elaborate note this description is in the main taken, resembled one of our mediæval cathedrals; its most striking feature was not the Temple proper, but its courts, surrounded with cloisters. The whole pile consisted in a series of terraces rising one above the other, on the topmost of which stood the sanctuary. The circumference of the entire edifice was about half a mile.

The outer court, known as the Court of the Gentiles, surrounded the Temple; on each side were cloisters with pillars of the Corinthian order of white marble, with roofs of curiously engraved cedar. The open court was laid with coloured tessellated pavement; a flight of fourteen steps led from this outer court—beyond which no Gentile might pass—to the inner court. This was a square, and was divided into terraces which rose one above the other in a westerly direction to the Temple, which was situated at the western end of the square. The first terrace was termed the 'Court of the Women,' not because it was exclusively allotted to them, but because no Israelitish woman might advance farther. There were cloisters with handsome pillars round this court also; a flight of five or, as some say, fifteen steps led to the second terrace, 'the Court of the Israelites,' which was parted by a low wall from a still higher terrace, 'the Court of the Priests.' This surrounded the Temple and led to it by a flight of twelve steps.

The Temple itself was comparatively small, 150 feet long, 150 feet broad, but narrowing as it receded to a breadth of 90 feet. Josephus states it as only 150 feet high, but opinions

as to its height vary. It was built of blocks of white marble covered with plates of gold. It contained, besides other chambers, a vestibule, the Holy Place entered by a golden door, and the Holy of Holies.

The gate . . . which is called Beautiful. It is not certain whether (a) this refers to the gate called 'Nicanor,' or (b) to the gate called 'Shushan.' (a) The gate 'Nicanor' led from the court of the Gentiles to the inner court of the Israelites. (b) The Shushan gate was an outer gate, and led out from the court of the Gentiles. The market for the sale of doves and animals for sacrifice was held close by this gate. It was named after Susa (Shushah), the 'City of Lilies' (שִׁשְׁתָּי), some say, because a picture of the royal Persian residence was painted or carved on the gate (Meyer suggests the origin of the name might be sought from the lily-shaped capitals of the pillars of the gate, *שִׁשְׁתָּי*

שִׁשְׁתָּי, 1 Kings vii. 19). Josephus, without particularizing, speaks of one of the Temple gates excelling all the others in richness of material and in decoration. It was made of Corinthian brass, overlaid with plates of gold and silver, and was fifty cubits high.

Ver. 3. **Asked an alms.** Meyer, quoting from Vajikra Rabbi, f. xx. 3, 4, gives us some Jewish forms of begging: 'Merere in me,' 'In me benefac. tibi,' etc.

Ver. 4. **And Peter, fastening his eyes on him with John, said, Look on us.** Calvin, commenting on this miracle about to be worked by Peter and John, asks whether they had the power of working such miracles when they pleased, and replies they were so exclusively ministers of the Divine power that they attempted nothing of their own will, and the Lord worked through them whenever it was expedient. Hence it happened they healed one sufferer—not all sufferers promis-

ciously, for the Holy Spirit guided them here just as in other matters. So Peter, in answer to the poor cripple's prayer for alms, moved by the Holy Ghost, fixes his earnest gaze on him, to discover if he were worthy of the glorious gift of health he had to bestow.

Ver. 5. **And he gave heed unto them.** The sufferer, perhaps surprised at this unusual notice from a passer-by, gazed up at Peter and John with rapt attention (the Greek word is far stronger than the English equivalent), *knowing* he was about to receive some kindness, he knew not what, from these holy men, whom doubtless he knew well by sight, having often seen



The Golden Gate (Exterior).

them go up to the Temple.

Ver. 6. **Then Peter said.** Recognising from something he could read in that face, marked by years of suffering and want, that *here* was true faith.

**Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee.** Centuries after, Cornelius à Lapide beautifully relates how Thomas Aquinas once came to Pope Innocent IV. at a moment when the pontiff had before him a great treasure of gold. 'See, Thomas,' said Innocent, 'see, the Church can no more say as it did in those first days, "Silver and gold have I none."' 'True, holy father,' replied Thomas Aquinas, 'but the Church of the present day can hardly say to a lame man what the Church of the first days said, "Arise and walk"' (Cornelius à Lapide, quoted by Wordsworth). Peter and his companions in the Church of Jerusalem were compelled literally to comply with their Master's injunction (Matt. x. 9), 'Provide neither gold nor silver in your purses.' The community of pos-

sessions, a state of things which prevailed then generally (though not universally) in the city, had the effect of producing an ever-increasing poverty among the brethren.

**In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.** When their Master performed a miracle, His language was that of direct command, as in Luke v. 24: 'I say unto thee, Arise,' and the palsied man rose up healed; while Peter likewise bids the helpless sufferer 'arise,' but he commands in his Master's name, by the power of which the wonder-work was to be accomplished.

**Ver. 7. And he took him by the right hand.** To the word of command, Peter, following his Master's example in such cases (see Mark ix. 27), grasps him by the right hand, thus encouraging him to obey the command to arise. On the use of such outward instrumentality, Chrysostom remarks: 'So, too, Christ did; oftentimes would He heal with a word, oftentimes with an act; frequently, too, He would stretch out His hand where their faith was too weak, that it (the miracle of healing) might not seem to have worked of itself' (Chrysostom, quoted in Alford).

**His feet and ankle bones received strength.** Commentators remark on the accuracy and exactness of the description. They are the words of one who had received the professional training of a physician.

**Ver. 8. And entered with them into the temple.** Instead of at once going to his home or any other place, his first thought seems to have been: 'He would go into the sanctuary of his God and there return thanks for his great deliverance.' Peter and John, guided by the Holy Ghost, when they cast their eyes on the poor cripple, were not deceived in their estimate of his character.

**Vers. 9, 10. And all the people saw him walking.** The crowds in the temple-court knew him as he walked among them for that helpless beggar whom they had seen so many times lying by the 'Beautiful Gate'; they saw him now, who had never walked before, full of life and power, praising God, and were struck with amazement and wonder at the greatness of the miracle.

**Ver. 11. And as the lame man which was healed held Peter and John.** That is, while he was holding them fast or keeping near them (see De Wette), perhaps, as Alford suggests, in the ardour of his gratitude, that he might testify to all who his benefactors were.

**In the porch that is called Solomon's.** This porch or cloister was on the eastern side of the court of the Gentiles. It was built on an artificial embankment which filled up a deep valley. The embankment was the work of King Solomon,—hence, perhaps, the name,—and the cloister was restored on the original plan.

It was in this cloister that the traffic of the money-changers was carried on. According to Lightfoot, the whole court of the Gentiles was spoken of popularly, at times, as Solomon's Porch. It was here, in winter-time, at the feast of Dedication, that Jesus walked when the Jews took up stones to stone Him.

#### *Second Discourse of St. Peter, 12-26.*

This second sermon of St. Peter is even more briefly reported than the first. Compared with the summary Divine wisdom has preserved for us in the 'Acts,' it must have been originally a discourse of some length. The last division

especially (vers. 17-26) has apparently been much abbreviated. It evidently starts with the knowledge that much concerning Jesus of Nazareth, dwelt upon by St. Peter at Pentecost, was known to the crowds now thronging the Porch of Solomon. It only touches upon the awful 'death' of Jesus, in which death he tries to excuse the guilt of the Jewish people by urging for them the plea, 'They knew not what they did.' The central point of the address is the earnest exhortation to the Jews to repentance and faith, that they might share in the glorious blessings of the future—in which blessings they, as the people from whom Christ sprung and to whom He was first sent, seemed especially invited to share.

The sermon falls into two divisions—(a) 12-16. The miracle of healing the lame man, at which ye marvel, is a work of God's, done to glorify that Jesus of Nazareth whom *you* crucified and *God* raised from the dead; (b) 17-26. But you did this deed in ignorance, God all the while carrying out His design; so repent now, and share in a salvation which Christ will bring—Christ who will one day, as your prophets have said, return.

**Ver. 12. And when Peter saw it, he answered unto the people, etc.** The wondering gaze of the throng in the temple-court seemed to ask, 'What mighty power is possessed by these men? What holy men must these be for God to have endowed them with these strange miraculous gifts?' It was in answer to that inquiring, anxious look, more than to any direct question, that Peter replied with his second sermon (see Lange), which he opens with a startling question, 'Men of Israel, do you think *we* have done this great thing? Do you attribute this to *our* wondrous skill, or do you look upon this strange power as bestowed on us, as a reward for our piety and goodness?'

**Ver. 13. The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers.** No words could have riveted the attention of the people like these. '*We* have not done this great thing which so astonishes you, but the Eternal of hosts, the Glory and Hope of Israel, the covenant God, in whose royal house we all are standing—*He* has done it.'

**Hath glorified his Son Jesus,** and by doing it hath glorified that Jesus whom ye all know. 'His Son' (ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ). So the Vulgate and ancient interpreters generally (as though the Greek word was υἱός). All scholars now are agreed that the passage should be rendered 'hath glorified His servant Jesus.' Messiah is constantly designated by this title, 'Servant of the Lord' (עֲבֹד יְהוָה), in the second part of Isaiah (chaps.

xl.-lxvi.), as the One who carries out the deliberate plan of God—the Minister of the Eternal—in the redemption of the world. The title is directly applied to Christ (Matt. xii. 18) in a quotation from the famous Isaiah prophecies: 'Behold my Servant (עַבְדִּי), whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased.' The appellation referring to Christ occurs in the Acts four times with the same signification (comp. ver. 26 or this chapter in iv. 27, 30). None of the apostles is ever called εἰς Θεοῦ, but only δοῦλος Θεοῦ.

**Whom ye delivered up, and denied him.** The picture St. Peter paints to the Jews of their guilt is exceedingly vivid. He piles up the terrible contrasts. This Jesus God hath glorified; but ye,

denying that He was Messiah, have delivered Him up to shame and death. Pilate, the mocking careless Roman, could not find in his heart to condemn Him; but you urged him on, clamouring for His blood. You were offered (ver. 14) the choice between a murderer and the Holy and Righteous One, and you chose the murderer. The Prince of life, whom God raised from the dead, you in your shortsightedness deprived of life.

**Ver. 14. But ye denied the Holy One and the Just.** Old Testament titles of Messiah, where He is called the Holy One, the Righteous Branch, the Lord our Righteousness, God's Righteous Servant who should justify many (Isa. liii. 11).

**Ver. 15. The Prince of life.** Life here, in its highest sense, is intended—eternal life (see John i. 4, v. 26, ii. 25); but it includes also physical life. Alford even suggests the possibility that the words may contain an allusion to the great miracle [the raising of Lazarus], which was the immediate cause of the enmity of the rulers to Jesus.

**Whereof we are witnesses.** After an unfolding of the marvellous connection between the sacred Israelitic prophecies and the Life and Passion of Jesus of Nazareth, when the apostles came to speak of the resurrection and of the risen glorified Jesus, they would constantly say here simply, grandly (einfach grossartig (Meyer)), 'and of this we are witnesses, for we have seen Him risen.'

**Ver. 16. And his name through faith in his name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know.** We will take these words in the order of the original Greek: 'And through faith in His name.' Peter had just related (in ver. 15) what was the ground of his perfect faith: *he had been one of the witnesses of the risen Lord.* He now proceeds to tell them that the miracle they are wondering at is the result of that faith.

**In his name.** The miracle of healing was worked by the name of Jesus, uttered under the condition of perfect faith above mentioned.

**This man strong, whom ye see.** Here Peter doubtless pointed to the man standing, as we know, close by the apostles.

**Yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness.** The faith which Peter possessed, and by means of which he had healed the lame man, is represented as the work of Christ (*i.e.* faith in Christ is the gift of Christ); in other words, the expression 'which is by Him' may be explained thus: Faith in Jesus of Nazareth as Messiah came to Peter partly owing to his having witnessed the life and work, and especially the resurrection, of Christ—partly through the revelations of the Spirit sent by Christ from the Father at Pentecost. This seems a fairly accurate statement of the conditions under which this first great apostolical miracle was wrought: (1) It was worked solely by a perfect faith in Jesus of Nazareth as Messiah (which faith, as we have seen, was the gift of Christ); and (2) The faith was the faith of the apostles, not of the lame man who was healed; it was evidently money, not health, that he hoped to receive from them. 'Silver and gold have I none,' said Peter. All that can be said of the restored cripple is, that he was an eminently fit subject for the distinguished mercy shown to him. Peter and John, guided by the Holy Spirit, no doubt perceived this. His brave and grateful conduct after he was restored to health and strength, is a sufficient index to his character.

**Ver. 17. Peter's tone changes here.** After his vivid picture of the awful guilt incurred by the Jews as a nation in murdering the Messiah, he now lovingly would not have them despair, but tells them they knew Him not when they consented to that cruel death—a death, too (ver. 18), which was necessary as part of the redemption plan of God.

**Ver. 17. And now, brethren.** Notice the apostle no longer gravely, though courteously, addresses the people as 'men of Israel' (ver. 12), but affectionately as 'brethren.'

**Through ignorance ye did it.** Not recognising under that meek and lowly form the conquering Messiah they so fondly looked for to free Israel from the foreigner's degrading yoke which had so long weighed them down,—the triumphant King who should restore the never-forgotten glories of David and Solomon.

**As did also your rulers.** Just one loving word to those Sadducean rulers, who then possessed such great power over the people, in case any of their proud unbelieving hearts had been pierced at his narrative of the death of 'the Just.'

It was our Lord's words on the cross which suggested the beautiful thought of this 17th verse: 'Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do' (Luke xxiii. 34; see also 1 Tim. ; Eph. i. 13).

**Ver. 18. In reference to God, the sin of Israel, consisting in the rejection and murder of Messiah, may be forgiven, in so far as it at the same time involved the fulfilment of the divine decree made mention of by all the prophets, 'that Messiah should suffer.'**

**Which God showed by the mouth of all the prophets.** 'Omnes prophetæ in universum non prophetarunt nisi de diebus Messiae' (*Sanhedr.* 99, 1, quoted by Alford). These words of Peter's are not to be understood as a hyperbole (Kuinoel), or in the sense given to them by Olshausen, who, looking upon the entire history of the Jews as typical, in that view maintains that all the ancient prophets prophesied of Christ. Very many of the prophets describe with more or less distinctness the sufferings and the death of Messiah—all of them looked on with sure hope to the times of restoration and redemption. This longed-for restoration and redemption was only to be won by the sufferings and death of Messiah. Meyer's view slightly differs from the above. He looks back—as on a thing accomplished—to redemption, won only through the death and suffering of the Messiah Jesus. Of this redemption all the prophets spoke.

**Ver. 19. Repent ye therefore (ὁὐ).** Seeing, then, that your guilt, great though it be, does not shut you out from pardon and reconciliation in the blood of the Messiah, whom in ignorance you crucified, 'repent ye therefore.'

**And be converted**—that is, turn from your present way of life, receive the crucified Jesus as Messiah. In a similar exhortation (chap. ii. 38), Peter adds, 'and be baptized;' but this naturally would be understood, in the present instance, as several thousand had so recently received the rite of baptism immediately after their conversion to Christ.

**That your sins may be blotted out** (in the blood of Jesus—obliterated, as it were, from the book of record or tablet where they were written). No doubt this idea of 'blotting out' refers to the baptism in the name of Jesus—that mystical washing away of sin.

When the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; Ver. 20. And he shall send Jesus Christ. This rendering is undoubtedly incorrect; ἔτι δὲ followed by a subjunctive ἵνα, cannot signify 'when' in the sense of *postquam* (Beza, Castalio, and others, and also the English Version). It can only be translated 'in order that the times of refreshing,' etc. What, now, are we to understand by this statement of St. Peter? 1st. That these times of refreshing, relief, or rest for the wearied and faithful toilers of the world, will come when the Jewish people, as a people, shall acknowledge Jesus as Messiah; and 2d. That these times of refreshing are closely connected with the Second Coming of the Lord. The second clause of the statement (ver. 20) is added to define with greater exactness the nature of the 'times of refreshing,' as a period in which Jesus the Messiah shall come again and comfort with His presence His own faithful servants. We have doubtless, in our very short abstract of this division of St. Peter's sermon, a distinct reference to a season of rest and gladness which the coming of Messiah in His glory would herald; it is apparently identical with the period of Messiah's reign for a thousand years, described in that portion of the Apocalypse beginning (xi. 15), when 'the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ.' St. Peter connects these events with the conversion of the Jewish people. Now it may be pointed out by thoughtful men—not necessarily unbelievers—that more than eighteen centuries have passed by since the inspired apostle spoke these words, and the conversion of the Jewish people—as a people—seems still as remote an event as it appeared to be some forty years after the date of the present discourse (we may assume that after the fall of the city in A.D. 70, few Jews, comparatively speaking, became Christians). To this the reply naturally suggests itself: Though after eighteen centuries the heart of the 'chosen' race seems as hard as ever; still, circumstance unprecedented in the history of the world, God has kept them together. Though dispersed to the four quarters of the globe, they are as distinct and separate a people now as they were eighteen centuries back. Is it not surely for some great purpose, still hidden in perhaps a remote future, that they are kept in their strange, apparently unnatural, separation?

**From the presence of the Lord.** 'Since the blessings in question are laid up there, He is, and must be, received thence' (Hackett).

**Ver. 20. And he shall send Jesus Christ.** See above, the note on the 'times of refreshing,' with which period this Second Advent of the Lord must be considered as contemporaneous.

**Ver. 21. Whom the heaven must receive.** Some commentators (e.g. Bengel, Olshausen, Stier) have adopted another rendering of the Greek words (which makes δὲ the subject) 'who must receive heaven,' considering that the usually-received translation involves a statement injurious to the all-pervading majesty of Christ; but it is doubtful whether διχομαί is ever used in the sense of 'to possess.' The statement that heaven must receive Christ until the period of His Second Advent, is anything but derogatory to the majesty of the Redeemer who will reign from heaven; it is only inconsistent with the doctrine of the ubiquity of Christ's body which Lutheran

divines invented to strengthen their view of the corporeal presence in the Eucharist.

**Until the times of restitution of all things.** The word ἀναστροφή (restitution) occurs here only in the New Testament, but we often find the verb from which it is derived. 'Elias truly shall first come and restore (ἀναστρέψαι) all things' (Matt. xvii. 11; see, too, Acts i. 6). The full signification of the word is renewal or restoration of primeval purity, order, happiness; setting right the present wild disorder and confusion: good will then finally triumph over evil, truth over falsehood. The 'times of restitution' signify the same epoch as the 'times of refreshing' (here all the best modern commentators agree). Gloag well sums up St. Peter's thoughts here: 'Accordingly, the idea of the apostle seems to be that so long as the unbelief of Israel continues, Christ will remain in heaven, but that their repentance and conversion will bring about the "times of refreshing" and of the "restoration of all things," which will either immediately precede or coincide with the Second Advent.'

**Which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.** These 'times of restitution'—this glorious restoration to holiness and happiness, is the theme of all prophecy in every age in the Old Testament. It was the expectation of this 'restitution,' so deeply rooted in the hearts of all Jews, which was the principal cause of their summary rejection of a suffering Messiah. They read their glorious sacred books in the strong false light of their own jealous hopes and burning desires; and so they passed over the plain intimations of some of their noblest prophecies, which told them how the glory they longed after could only be reached through a long weary training of pain and sorrow, and the triumph of Messiah only through His suffering and death.

**Vers. 22-24.** These verses are explanatory of the general statement of ver. 21, 'Which God hath spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets.' They first speak of Moses and his famous words relating to Messiah, and then dwell on the testimony of the prophets collectively from Samuel downwards.

**Vers. 22, 23.** The quotation is from the LXX. Version (Deut. xviii. 15, 18, 19). The words of the original are not exactly given, but the paraphrase of St. Peter faithfully reproduces the original sense. The Deuteronomy passage promises, at some future period, that God—seeing that the children of Israel were unable to endure the terrors of His voice or the glory of His presence—would send them another Mediator, through whom He would communicate to them His will, as He had done through Moses (see also Heb. xii. 18-21).

**A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me.** *Raise up*, not here 'from the dead,' but 'will cause to appear' (ἀναστρέψαι, ὅτι, *wird aufstehen lassen* (De Wette)).

**Of your brethren.** Another graceful and loving touch. This Messiah, who was to work such blessing to the world, was to be one of you, a Jew, *like unto me*. 'The likeness of Christ to Moses is beautifully though silently traced by St. Stephen in his speech before the Sanhedrim,' Acts vii. (Wordsworth). What prophet of all that long and honoured line, from the day of the death of Moses to the times of Malachi, answered

in any way to the Deuteronomy promise, 'like unto me'? Only to Jesus of Nazareth could the words apply. Like Moses was Jesus a Law giver, a Mediator between God and man, and the Founder of a new dispensation of religion.

Ver. 23. **And it shall come to pass** (*ἔσται δὲ*). These words do not occur in the passage quoted by St. Peter.

**Every soul which will not hear that prophet.** The apostle had been excusing the people who had crucified the Lord, seeing they had done it ignorantly. Now, in the words of the Pentateuch prophecy, he announces the fate of every soul which, through hardness of heart, self-will, hatred of goodness and purity, refuses to listen to the voice of Jesus the Messiah.

**Shall be destroyed from among the people.** The words of Deuteronomy, in the passage quoted from the LXX., are *ἐν τῇ ἀδικίᾳ αὐτοῦ*, 'I will require it of him' (E. V.), or better translated, 'I will exact vengeance from him.' St. Peter here has substituted an expression which constantly occurs in the Pentateuch; and as Hackett remarks, the only difference is, while the original words of the passage in Deuteronomy affirm the purpose of God to exact vengeance, the well-known formula employed by the apostle defines the nature of the punishment reserved for that stubborn soul which refuses to hear the Lord Jesus. This punishment is exclusion from the kingdom of God, from life in its highest sense; and this exclusion from life carries with it the sentence of eternal death (see also De Wette and Meyer).

Ver. 24. **All the prophets from Samuel, and those that follow after.** Of the prophets between Moses and the days of Samuel, we possess few recorded sayings. Samuel is mentioned as the founder of the so-called schools of the prophets. Gloag especially notes this verse as probably containing only an epitome of what St. Peter said on this subject; he perhaps proved by express quotation from the prophets, or at least from some of them, the assertions it contained. It is, however, an undisputed fact, that in all the prophetic writings preserved by the providence of God in the Old Testament, which are guarded now by the Jews with a jealous and devoted reverence, the grand theme is the coming of Messiah, and the sure hope of a joyful season of restoration and refreshing.

**Have likewise foretold of these days.** 'These days' may, as Alford and others maintain, refer to the days 'now present,' the Gospel times of restoration, as taking in the whole of the period known as 'the last days;' but the reference more clearly points to 'the days' immediately in the speaker's mind, to which he had been directing his hearers' attention, the Second Advent and the times of restitution of all things (with this view Meyer and De Wette agree).

Ver. 25. **Ye are the children of the prophets and of the covenant.** 'Children' (*υἱοί*). 'Children' in this sense is a very common expression in Hebrew thought. So in Matt. viii. 12, we read of 'the children of the kingdom;' in Luke xvi. 8, 'children of the world' and 'children of light.' They were children of the prophets, for the promise of their prophets was in the first instance to them (chap. ii. 39). They were children of the covenant as the heirs of Abraham, with whom God made a covenant when He chose him and his descendants for a peculiar people, and

restricted the promised seed of the woman to his family, saying, 'In thy seed (that is, in the Messiah) shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed.' The last quotation is a free citation from the LXX. Gen. xxii. 18, where, instead of *αἱ σαρκεῖς*, the kindred, we find *τὰ ἔθνη*, the nations.

Ver. 26. **Unto you first God, etc.** 'First.' St. Peter here clearly recognises definitely that upon others as well as Israel, the glory of the Lord has risen (Isa. lx.). Perhaps at this moment, full of the Holy Spirit, the fact of the glorious breadth of redemption flashed on the speaker's mind with startling clearness; and then, when the moment of inspiration was over and gone, the old Jewish prejudices and jealousy mastered him again, for we see by the history of the 'Acts,' as the Lord's purposes were gradually developed, how slowly and even reluctantly St. Peter gave up calling common or unclean what God had cleansed. The utter impossibility of the admission of the Gentile world into the Church, except through the medium of Judaism, was deeply rooted in the hearts of Peter and the apostles. They had all been brought up in the rigid school of Jewish Messianic hopes, which admitted, certainly, the great heathen world into Messiah's kingdom, but only on the stern condition of all becoming Jews and submitting to the requirements of the Mosaic law. 'The Gentiles are not handed over to Israel in this age, but they will be in the days of Messiah' (*Berish. Rab. f. 28, 2*, quoted by Meyer; see also Olshausen on this place).

**Having raised up his Son.** Not from the dead, but, as in verse 22, 'having caused to appear.' 'His Son,' *τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ*, 'His Servant' (see note on ver. 13).

**To bless you** (*εὐλογῶντες*), *blessing*. Thus fulfilling the great promise made to Abraham, 'In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed.' The act of blessing not done once and for all, but a continuing one on the part of the Lord Jesus from His throne in heaven.

**In turning away every one of you from his iniquities.** Or better rendered, 'provided that each one turn from his iniquities,' *ut convertat se unusquisque* (Vulg.). Commentators are divided on the question whether *ἐν τῷ ἀποστρέφειν* possess (a) a transitive or (b) an intransitive meaning here. For (a) it is urged that this verb is not found used intransitively in the New Testament. The transitive sense is explained by Alford thus: 'He came blessing you, in turning away every one from your iniquities,' thus conferring on you the best of blessings (so generally Calvin, Hammond, Wetstein, Bengel, Hackett, and apparently Gloag). For (b) a list of passages where the verb is used intransitively is given by Meyer—*e.g.*, Xen. *Hist.* iii. 4, 12; Hom. *Od.* iii. 597; LXX. Gen. xviii. 33. If this intransitive sense be adopted, the meaning of the passage would be, 'Which blessing is to be gained by every one of you turning from your iniquities' (Theophilus, Eusebius, Beza, Meyer, De Wette, and the Vulgate). The intransitive meaning (b) is decidedly to be preferred. Thus the blessing of the Lord Jesus is made to depend on the individual life, and the concluding words of St. Peter's second sermon bring out prominently the grand truth, that the promised blessing will come *not* to the man who merely professes an orthodox belief, but to the man who, receiving Jesus, lives the life which Jesus loves.

## CHAPTER IV.

*Peter and John before the Sanhedrim—The Prayer of the Church—  
A Picture of the Church of the First Days.*

- 1 **A**ND as they spake unto the people, the priests, and the captain of the temple, and the <sup>a</sup> Sadducees, came upon <sup>a</sup> See Mat. xxii. 23.
- 2 them, <sup>b</sup> Being grieved that they taught the people, and preached <sup>b</sup> Ch. xvi. 18 (Gk.).
- 3 through Jesus <sup>c</sup> the resurrection from the dead. And <sup>d</sup> they <sup>c</sup> Ch. xvii. 18. Cp. ch. iii. 15, 20 with ch. v. 17 and xxiii. 8.
- 4 laid hands on them, and put *them* in <sup>e</sup> hold <sup>e</sup> unto the next day: <sup>d</sup> See Lu. xxi. 12.
- 5 for it was now eventide. Howbeit many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was <sup>f</sup> about <sup>f</sup> Ch. v. 15 (Gk.).
- 6 five thousand. And it came to pass on the morrow, that their <sup>g</sup> rulers, and elders, and scribes, And <sup>h</sup> Annas the high priest, <sup>g</sup> Cp. ch. ii. 42. Vv. 8, 26<sup>f</sup>. See Jo. iii. 2.
- 7 and <sup>i</sup> Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were <sup>h</sup> Lu. iii. 9; Jo. xviii. 13, 24.
- 8 of the kindred of the high priest, were gathered together at <sup>i</sup> See Mat. xxvi. 3.
- 9 Jerusalem. And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, <sup>j</sup> By what power, or by what name, have ye done this? <sup>j</sup> See Mat. xxi. 23. Ch. xiii. 9. See Mat. x. 20.
- 10 Then Peter, <sup>k</sup> filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye <sup>k</sup> Lu. xxi. 14; ch. xii. 19, xxiv. 8, xxviii. 18.
- 11 <sup>l</sup> rulers of the people, and elders of Israel, If we this day be <sup>l</sup> See Mk. x. 52.
- 12 examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by <sup>m</sup> what *means* he is <sup>m</sup> made whole; Be it known unto you all, and <sup>m</sup> Jo. xx. 31 (Gk.); ch. iii. 6 (Gk.); 16. See ch. ii. 24.
- 13 to all the people of Israel, that <sup>n</sup> by <sup>n</sup> the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom <sup>n</sup> God raised from the dead, *even* by him doth this *man* stand here before you whole. <sup>n</sup> Cited generally from Pa. cxviii. 22. See Mat. xxi. 42.
- 14 This is <sup>o</sup> the stone <sup>o</sup> which was <sup>o</sup> set at nought of you builders, <sup>o</sup> See Mk. ix. 12.
- 15 which is become the head of the corner. <sup>p</sup> Neither is there <sup>p</sup> So ch. xiii. 39; 1 Tim. ii. 5. See Mat. i. 21; Gal. i. 7.
- 16 salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby <sup>q</sup> we must be saved. <sup>q</sup> Ver. 19. See ch. i. 13, viii. 14.
- 17 Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and <sup>r</sup> John, and <sup>r</sup> perceived that they were unlearned and <sup>r</sup> ignorant <sup>r</sup> men, they <sup>r</sup> See Mat. xi. 25.
- 18 marvelled; and <sup>s</sup> they took knowledge of them, that they had <sup>s</sup> 1 Cor. xiv. 16, 23, 24; 2 Cor. xi. 6 (Gk.).
- 19 been with Jesus. And beholding the man which was healed <sup>t</sup> See Mat. xxv. 24.
- 20 standing with them, they could say nothing against *it*. But <sup>t</sup> Ch. iii. 11. See Mat. v. 22.
- 21 when they had commanded them to go aside out of <sup>u</sup> the <sup>u</sup> So Jo. xi. 47, xii. 19.
- 22 council, they conferred among themselves, Saying, <sup>v</sup> What shall <sup>v</sup> Ver. 22; ch. iii. 9, 10.
- 23 we do to these men? for that indeed a notable miracle hath <sup>w</sup> been done by them <sup>w</sup> is <sup>w</sup> manifest to all them that dwell in Jeru- <sup>w</sup> So ch. v. 40. Cp. ch. v. 28. Song xxvii.
- 24 salem; and we cannot deny *it*. But that it spread no further <sup>x</sup> See ch. v. 29.
- 25 among the people, let us straitly threaten them, that *they* speak <sup>x</sup>
- 26 henceforth to no man in this name. And they <sup>y</sup> called them, <sup>y</sup>
- 27 and commanded them not to speak <sup>z</sup> at all nor teach in the <sup>z</sup>
- 28 name of Jesus. But Peter and John answered and said unto <sup>z</sup>
- 29 them, <sup>z</sup> Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto

<sup>1</sup> or in Jesus  
<sup>2</sup> wherein

<sup>3</sup> in custody

<sup>5</sup> or in

<sup>4</sup> He is the stone

<sup>6</sup> Instead of 'ignorant,' undistinguished or private persons.

- 20 you more than unto God, judge ye. For <sup>e</sup> we cannot but speak  
 21 *the things* which <sup>f</sup> we have seen <sup>g</sup> and heard. So when they had  
 further threatened *them*, they let them go, finding nothing how  
 they might punish them, <sup>e</sup> because of the people: for all *men*  
 22 <sup>h</sup> glorified God for <sup>i</sup> that which was done. For the man was  
 above forty years old, on whom this miracle of healing was  
 showed.<sup>h</sup>
- 23 And being let go, they went to <sup>h</sup> their own *company*, and  
 reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto  
 24 them. And when they heard *that*,<sup>g</sup> they lifted up their voice to  
 God <sup>i</sup> with one accord, and said, <sup>m</sup> Lord, <sup>n</sup> thou *art* God,<sup>o</sup>  
<sup>o</sup> which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that  
 25 in them is: Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast  
 said,<sup>11</sup> <sup>p</sup> Why did the heathen rage,<sup>12</sup> and the people imagine  
 26 vain *things*? The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers  
 were gathered together against the Lord, and against his  
 27 <sup>q</sup> Christ.<sup>13</sup> For <sup>r</sup> of a truth<sup>14</sup> against <sup>r</sup> thy holy child Jesus,  
<sup>r</sup> whom thou hast anointed, both <sup>r</sup> Herod, and <sup>r</sup> Pontius Pilate,  
 with <sup>r</sup> the Gentiles, and <sup>m</sup> the people of Israel, were gathered  
 28 together, For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel <sup>x</sup> de-  
 29 termined before to be done. And now, Lord, <sup>y</sup> behold their  
 threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all <sup>z</sup> bold-  
 30 ness *they* may speak thy word, By stretching forth thine hand  
 to heal;<sup>15</sup> and that <sup>z</sup> signs and wonders may be done <sup>z</sup> by the  
 31 name of <sup>z</sup> thy holy child Jesus. And when they had prayed,  
 the place <sup>z</sup> was shaken where they were assembled together;  
 and <sup>z</sup> they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and <sup>z</sup> they spake  
 the word of God with <sup>z</sup> boldness.
- 32 And the multitude of them that believed were of <sup>z</sup> one heart  
 and of <sup>z</sup> one soul: neither said any *of them*<sup>16</sup> that ought of the  
*things* which he possessed was his own; but <sup>z</sup> they had all  
 33 *things* common. And with great <sup>z</sup> power gave the apostles  
<sup>z</sup> witness of <sup>m</sup> the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great  
 34 <sup>z</sup> grace was upon them all. <sup>z</sup> Neither<sup>17</sup> was there any among  
 them that lacked: <sup>z</sup> for as many as were possessors of lands or

<sup>d</sup> So ch. xvi. 26. Cp. ch. ii. 2.<sup>e</sup> See ch. ii. 4.<sup>f</sup> So Phil. i. 14.<sup>g</sup> 2 Chron. xxx. 12.<sup>h</sup> Phil. i. 27 (Gk.). Cp. Ezek. xi. 19.<sup>i</sup> Ch. ii. 44.<sup>j</sup> See ch. i. 8.<sup>k</sup> See ch. i. 22.<sup>m</sup> See ch. ii. 24.<sup>n</sup> Ch. ii. 47 (Gk.), or Lu. ii. 40?<sup>o</sup> Cp. 2 Cor. viii. 14, 15.<sup>p</sup> So ch. ii. 45.<sup>7</sup> which we saw<sup>8</sup> was wrought<sup>9</sup> when they heard it<sup>10</sup> The Greek text here is slightly confused, and there are several variations in the older authorities. According to these, the English would run, 'Master, thou art God, who,' etc.<sup>11</sup> who by the Holy Ghost, even by the mouth of thy servant David, our father, hast said<sup>12</sup> why did the Gentiles rage<sup>13</sup> and against his anointed<sup>14</sup> The older authorities, after the words 'of a truth,' insert 'in this city.'<sup>15</sup> while thou stretchest forth thy hand for healing<sup>16</sup> and not one of them said<sup>17</sup> for neither



- houses sold them, and brought the prices of the *things* that  
 35 were sold, And <sup>9</sup> laid *them down* at the apostles' feet: and <sup>r</sup> dis- <sup>Ver. 37 ;</sup>  
 tribution was made unto every man <sup>s</sup> according as he had need. <sup>ch. v. 2.</sup>  
 36 And Joses,<sup>19</sup> who by the apostles was surnamed <sup>s</sup> 'Barnabas,' <sup>Ch. vi. 1.</sup>  
 (which is, being interpreted, The son of consolation,) <sup>s</sup> <sup>Ch. ii. 45</sup>  
 37 and<sup>21</sup> of the country of <sup>s</sup> Cyprus, Having land, <sup>(Gk.)</sup> sold *it*, and  
 brought the money, and <sup>s</sup> laid *it* at the apostles' feet. <sup>Ch. ix. 27,</sup>  
<sup>xi. 22, 25, 30,</sup>  
<sup>xii. 25, and</sup>  
<sup>ch. xiii.-xv. ;</sup>  
<sup>1 Cor. ix. 6 ;</sup>  
<sup>Gal. ii. 1, 9,</sup>  
<sup>x3: Col. iv. 10,</sup>  
<sup>\* Ch. xi. 19, 20,</sup>  
<sup>xiii. 4, xv. 39,</sup>  
<sup>xxi. 3, 16,</sup>  
<sup>xxvii. 4.</sup>
- <sup>19</sup> as any had need    <sup>10</sup> *The old authorities read, instead of 'Joses,' 'Joseph.'*  
<sup>20</sup> or the son of exhortation    <sup>21</sup> omit and

#### *Imprisonment of Peter and John, 1-4.*

The ever-increasing crowd (see ver. 4) seems to have called the attention of the temple authorities to the miracle and the subsequent teaching of Peter and John.

**The Priests.** The particular course on duty at the Temple during that week. The original division by King David of the priests into twenty-four orders or courses, each of which had charge of the Temple services for a week at a time, had probably been revived after the captivity; the particular duties from day to day were assigned to individuals by lot (see Lev. i. 9).

**Captain of the temple.** Not, as some have supposed, the Roman officer in command at the tower of Antonia, but the Jewish priest in command of the Levite guard of the Temple. The Romans seldom appear in the Acts as hostile to followers of Jesus.

**And the Sadducees.** This is the first mention in the Acts of the bitterest enemies of the little Church of the first days. Everything which seemed to teach the doctrine of the future life was especially hateful to the Sadducee leaders. This sect rejected all that mass of oral tradition which entered at this period so largely into the teaching of the most popular Jewish schools. It professed to accept, however, the written word (not merely the books of Moses) as the rule of faith. It affirmed, as their foundation doctrine, that this life was the whole of man's existence. The creed of the Sadducees seems to have been purely materialistic, denying the existence of angel and Spirit. Their importance and power at the time was clearly out of proportion to their real numbers, but they included in their ranks many of the most influential of the nation. The high priest's family appears to have consisted mainly of Sadducees (see Acts v. 17). Josephus mentions another son of Annas, subsequently high priest, as a Sadducee. During the earthly ministry of Jesus, it is the Pharisees who constantly appear as His bitter unrelenting foes: it was with them and their formalism and hypocrisy that He constantly came into collision; but when once the fact of the resurrection of the Master was taught by His disciples, and believed by ever-increasing thousands, the Sadducees, alarmed at the ready reception by so many of this great truth, fearful lest their whole system, which it directly contradicted, should be undermined, and their influence destroyed, endeavoured with all their power to stamp out the teaching of the Apostles. On the other hand, hints seem to be given us in this

book (Acts v. 34, 35), that the Pharisees, after the resurrection, relaxed their hostility towards the disciples of Jesus, partly influenced by the hatred shown by the Sadducee party, partly persuaded by a teaching which in many points agreed with their own doctrine (see also John xix. 39).

**Ver. 2. Being grieved that they taught the people.** The anger of the priests and captain of the Temple, whose duty it was to preserve a reverential order among the crowds who worshipped in the great sanctuary of Israel, was easily aroused by the Sadducees against these unauthorized teachers who were making such a rapid progress in the affections of the people (see ver. 4).

**And taught through Jesus the resurrection from the dead.** Here we have the real ground of the hostility of the powerful Sadducee party; they were troubled at this public announcement of the resurrection of the Crucified, well knowing that if this single instance of one being raised from the dead were substantiated before the people, their creed would be at once discredited.

**Ver. 3. It was now eventide.** When Peter and John went up into the Temple to pray, it was three in the afternoon. It was about six o'clock when the captain of the Temple arrested them.

**Ver. 4. Many of them which heard the word believed.** In sharp contrast to the arrest and persecution of the two leaders by the influential party in the state, the compiler of the 'Acts' notices, that though the rulers refused to hear, yet many of those who looked on the strange scene that afternoon in the Temple courts believed the message of Christ.

**And the number of the men was about five thousand.** The word translated 'men' no doubt included men and women. Some commentators would restrict the term to men only; Hackett, however, well observes: 'An emphasized or conscious restriction of the term to men would be at variance with that religious equality of the sexes so distinctly affirmed in the New Testament' (Gal. iii. 28).

#### *Arraignment before the Sanhedrim, 5-7.*

**Ver. 5. Their rulers.** 'Their' refers not to the apostles, but to the Jewish people; 'rulers,' to the Sanhedrists in general. The Sanhedrim is then further described as consisting of three orders:—

(1.) *Elders.* Heads of families who had a seat in the great council.

(2.) *Scribes.* Recognised teachers and interpreters of the divine law. Certain representatives of this important class in the Jewish state had seats in the supreme council. Wordsworth, on

Matt. ii. 4, quotes a supposition of Lightfoot that the scribes were Levites, and masters of colleges and schools.

(3.) *Annas the high priest . . . and as many as were of the kindred of the high priest.* In the other passages where the Sanhedrim is alluded to, this third order consisting of priests is termed 'the chief priests,' and occupies the first place. These chief priests included the reigning high priest, with others of his house who had borne the title (see note below), and possibly also the heads of the twenty-four courses of priests. Maimonides (quoted by Alford on Matt. ii. 4) speaks of the Sanhedrim as consisting of seventy-one members made up of priests, Levites, and Israelites. Each of these three orders is represented in the meeting of the Sanhedrim recounted in this passage — *the priests*, in the persons of Annas, Caiaphas, etc.; *the Levites*, by the scribes, if we adopt the supposition of Lightfoot given above; and *the Israelites*, by the elders, who, being heads of families, would represent Israel generally.

Ver. 6. *And Annas the high priest.* The Rabbis maintain that the Sanhedrim existed in the time of Moses, and refer to the incidents related in Num. xi. for its origin. Seventy elders were appointed in the wilderness to assist Moses in his task of judging the people. Tradition relates how this council continued in power until the captivity. It was remodelled by Ezra on the return. Its name, however, derived as it is from the Greek, points to a far later date—to some period in their history after the 'Law' came in contact with Greek thought and language.

The place of assembly for the Sanhedrim was a chamber in the temple, situated between the court of the Israelites and the court of the priests, and was called Gazith. Some forty years before the fall of the city, this sacred council ceased to sit in any of the courts of the temple, and removed to a building without the temple precincts. After the fall of the city, the Sanhedrim was allowed by the victorious Roman Government to hold its sittings at Japhneh. It was subsequently permanently removed to Tiberias. Some have supposed that when the power of life and death was taken from the Sanhedrists, they ceased to sit in the hall Gazith. The Sanhedrim was the supreme court in the Jewish nation. Its decrees apparently were respected beyond Palestine, for we read how Saul was provided with credentials from the Sanhedrim to the Jewish synagogues of Damascus, when he went to search out and imprison the Syrian followers of Jesus of Nazareth. Its powers embraced all matters, civil as well as religious. It tried accused persons, and its decisions admitted of no appeal. In the New Testament, the trials before the Sanhedrim of the Lord Jesus, Peter, John, Stephen, and Paul are related. Besides its criminal jurisdiction, this court was the supreme arbiter in all matters connected with religion.

The actual high priest at this time was Caiaphas; but Annas, his father-in-law, originally held this great dignity. The Idumean rulers, and after them the Roman Government, not unfrequently would arbitrarily depose the high priest, and could set up another in his room. But with the people the deposed functionary kept his title, and even still wore the high-priestly garments (see Bleek, who has a good note on this point in Matt. ii. 4). In our Lord's trial the accused was taken to Annas *first* (see also

Luke iii. 2), where Caiaphas is mentioned as 'high priest,' but *after* Annas. He was perhaps the most influential person among the Jews at this time. Raised to the high-priestly dignity by Cyrenius, the governor of Syria, then deposed by Valerius Gratus, procurator of Judea, early in the reign of Tiberius, he still continued to exercise the chief power during the priesthood of his son-in-law Caiaphas—a period of twelve years. Five of his sons were advanced to this high office during his lifetime.

*And Caiaphas.* He was nominally high priest, his father-in-law, Annas, exercising the real power from A.D. 24 to A.D. 36, and was deposed at the beginning of the reign of Caligula by Vitellius, then governor of Syria.

*And John and Alexander.* Nothing positively certain is known of these two. Lightfoot would identify John with Rabbi Johanan ben Zaccai, who is mentioned in the Talmud: after the fall of Jerusalem, he obtained permission from the Roman Government that the Sanhedrim might be settled at Japhneh. Alexander some consider identical with the brother of Philo the historian, and well known as alabarch or governor of the Egyptian Jews.

Ver. 7. *In the midst.* Tradition relates how the Sanhedrim sat in a circle or semicircle.

*By what power.* The Sanhedrists ask first, By what physical power or influence was this miracle wrought?

*By what name.* They go on to inquire, In virtue of what uttered name have ye done this? The judges well knew *the name*, but they wanted to convict Peter and John of sorcery, by having worked a miracle not in the name of God, but of a crucified malefactor. They hoped to bring the apostles under the awful death-sentence pronounced in the law (Deut. xiii.), which especially provides for the case when the sign or the wonder comes to pass. Maimonides, commenting on the words of Deut. xiii., speaks of one endeavouring to turn away the people from the Lord their God, and tells them that the sign such an one had performed was done by enchantment and witchcraft, and that, therefore, he must be strangled (*Yad-Hachasakah*, chap. ix.).

#### *St. Peter's Defence, 8–12.*

'Compare Peter a few days since in the palace of the high priest, thrice denying his Master from fear of prison and death, and now brought forth from prison, and confessing Christ before the same high priest and Sanhedrim which had delivered Christ up to Pilate for crucifixion, and charging them with His murder' (Wordsworth). What had brought about this change? *He had seen the risen Lord.*

Ver. 8. *Being filled with the Holy Ghost.* In accordance with the Saviour's promise (see St. Luke xxi. 14, 15).

Vers. 9, 10. *If we this day be examined, etc.* Ironical surprise runs through St. Peter's reply, which may be paraphrased thus: 'If we *really* are arraigned, which seems hardly credible, on account of the good deed done to this poor man (pointing to the healed cripple), know all of you, the miracle you ask about was done in the name of that Jesus so terribly dishonoured by you, but by God so signally honoured.'

*Jesus Christ of Nazareth*, quoting the title

nailed on the cross. 'Think not that we desire to conceal His country, Nazareth, or His death on the cross. Ye crucified Him, but He was raised by God, and now works miracles from heaven' (Chrysostom, quoted by Wordsworth).

Ver. 11. **This is the stone**, etc. The accusation of awful mistake with which he charges the judges of Israel, of dishonouring what God had so highly honoured, St. Peter repeats by boldly applying to them the well-known words of Ps. cxviii. 22. His meaning, which they quickly understood, was that the rulers of the Jews were the builders to whom the charge of the house of God was given. They should have been the first to acknowledge the long-looked-for Messiah, and to have worked for the glory of His kingdom, but *they* had rejected Him and cast Him aside; while *God*, by raising Him from the dead, had shown that He was the corner-stone on which the whole fabric of the spiritual temple of God on earth must rest.

Ver. 12. **None other name under heaven**. The apostle has ceased altogether referring to the case of the lame man made whole, and is here proclaiming before the assembled Sanhedrim his Master's name, not only as a name in the strength of which the diseases of the poor body might be healed,—that was a small matter,—but as the only name on which men might rest when they thought of eternity. This famous passage occupies a prominent position in the Smalcald Articles drawn up by Luther and adopted in A.D. 1537. It has been said, with some truth, that the adoption of these articles completed the Reformation, and was the definite declaration of the separation of the signatories from Rome.

#### *Judgment of the Sanhedrim, 13-18.*

Astonishment of Sanhedrists at the ability of Peter's reply. They remember the two apostles were companions of Jesus, and then consult privately together. They see that any punishment they might inflict would be ill received by the people, so they determine to dismiss the accused, threatening them if they continued to preach the name of the Crucified.

Ver. 13. **Unlearned**. Observing from the language and arguments used that Peter and John were untaught in the rabbinical learning of the Jewish schools.

**And obscure**, or common. Men of no mark.

**They marvelled**. The rulers were evidently astonished that one so unlearned and undistinguished should address them in such moving, powerful language.

**They recognised that they had been with Jesus**. 'Their wonder sharpened their recollection' (Meyer). Jesus had taught publicly on many occasions in Jerusalem and in the Temple courts, and we know some at least of the rulers at different times had been present. These now remembered the faces of Peter and John, who, no doubt, as His most trusted followers, were ever in the vicinity of the Master.

Ver. 14. **Standing with them**. The attitude of the healed one is mentioned with emphasis. No longer the cripple who had never walked or stood, and who by compassionate friends had been carried daily and laid as a suffering object to ask alms at the beautiful gate, he now *stands* near his deliverers.

Ver. 15. **They conferred among themselves**.

It has been asked, How were these apparently private deliberations known to St. Luke? Several probable answers have been given. Some of the priests who afterwards joined the little church (see chap. vi. 7) were doubtless present at the council. St. Paul himself, who had much to do with the composition of these memoirs of the Church of the first days, not improbably was a Sanhedrist.

Ver. 17. **Let us straitly threaten them, that they speak henceforth to no man in this name**. The council could find no pretext for punishing them. The people, with the memory of the words and works of the Master of Peter and John vividly recalled to them by the work of mercy just done to the poor lame man, were clearly on the side of the accused apostles; so, with mere threats and a stern charge to bring no more before the people the **NAME** of that One they had condemned and murdered, but whose look and words haunted them with a nameless terror, they dismissed their prisoners. The expectation that the apostles would have been convicted under the statutes of the law based on Deut. xiii. (see note on ver. 7), was frustrated by the strong feeling shown by the people in favour of the apostles. This the Sanhedrim fairly confessed by their dread lest the knowledge of the new miracle done by the followers of Jesus should spread any farther. The same charge in former days had been made against the Lord, when He was accused of performing miracles by the power of Beelzebub; but then, as now, it fell, owing to the good sense of the people generally, who never for a moment could really bear such a supposition either in the case of Christ or His disciples.

#### *The Answer of Peter and John to the Threats of the Sanhedrim, 19-22.*

They say obedience must be shown to God rather than to men; as for them, they were only witnesses. After being again threatened, they are freed from custody.

Ver. 19. **In the sight of God**. The Eternal is appealed to as the ever-present Judge,—as sitting invisible in that august council before whom they were then pleading.

**Whether it be right to hearken unto you rather than unto God, judge ye**. Ver. 20. **For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard**. The point of the apostle's reply was, that they were not teaching the people as self-appointed Rabbis, but were only acting as witnesses of Jesus. Their words may be thus paraphrased: 'The love of Christ constrains us; we cannot drown the voice we know to be God's voice, which forbids us to suppress our message, as ye would have us do, which tells us to bear our public witness to those mighty works we saw and heard during our Master's life on earth.' The noble words of Socrates, perhaps the greatest of the Greek philosophers, when he was pleading before his judges, who condemned him to death, bear a striking resemblance to the bold, faithful utterance of these unlearned Galileans: 'Athenians, I will obey God rather than you; and if you would let me go, and give me my life on condition that I should no more teach my fellow-citizens, sooner than agree to your proposal I would prefer to die a thousand times' (Plato, *Apol.* p. 23 B).

Ver. 21. **Finding nothing how they might punish them, because of the people**. The civi-

dent good-will of the people no doubt procured the dismissal of the apostles this time without punishment.

**For all glorified God for that which was done.** No penalty, such as scourging or imprisonment, would then have been tolerated by popular sentiment. But besides this public feeling working in favour of the disciples of Jesus, it is more than probable that in the Sanhedrim itself several members secretly favoured the new sect. Some have supposed that Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea were members of this council. That the powerful R. Gamaliel, one certainly of the most influential of the Sanhedrim leaders, was disposed to favour them we know from Acts v. 34.

*The Apostles with their own People after their Release, 23-31.*

The prayer of the Church of Jerusalem to God to support and defend the threatened and persecuted followers of His Son, and the answer from heaven.

**Ver. 23. They went to their own people.** The Greek word here translated 'their own people' has been understood by some to signify 'their brother apostles,' by others 'the church in the apostles' house,' or 'those with whom the apostles were accustomed to unite in prayer.' The term, however, is a far more inclusive one, and comprehends a large number of the believers then in the city. These no doubt had come together on the threatening aspect of the affairs of the little community, as the arrest of the two leaders by the orders of the Sanhedrim was of course known throughout Jerusalem. Others, too, had doubtless hurried to the same house on hearing of the release of Peter and John. It would seem that the primitive Church in Jerusalem already possessed a common resort for prayer and meeting together.

**And reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them.** To their own people then assembled in the house of the Nazarenes, the two relate all that the Sanhedrim judges had said to them. St. Chrysostom remarks here 'that they told their tale not for their own glory. . . . All that their adversaries had said, this they told; their own part it is likely they omitted.' Nor did their story on the whole give fair promise for the future. Dark and stormy days evidently lay before the little community. The highest civil and religious authority in the nation had taken formal and public notice of their proceedings, and had condemned them; and though the Sanhedrim had been for the moment restrained from severe measures, it was only too clear that when the temporary pressure of public opinion, always so fluctuating, was removed, the majority of the council would at once proceed to harsher measures. Of the uncertain duration of popular favour, the followers of Jesus had had sad experience in the case of their Master, who was welcomed by the people as the promised King Messiah on the day of Palms, and amid the plaudits of the populace, within five days after, crucified by them as a malefactor. So they now prayed to the God of Israel a very earnest prayer for help and succour.

**Ver. 24. They lifted up their voice to God with one accord.** In what manner now are we to conclude that this primitive congregation of Christ's followers poured forth their earnest supplications to the Most High? Some would prefer to understand the prayer to have been

an utterance of one of the apostles or disciples, the thoughts suggested by the urgent need of the moment; and that while one uttered the words, the rest followed, some with their voice, others only with the heart. Another view suggested is, that the whole assembly sung together the 2d Psalm, and that Peter made it the basis of his prayer in their present perplexity. Another and, as it seems, a more thoughtful consideration of the passage, regards vers. 24-30 as part of a solemn form of prayer used by the Apostolic Church of Jerusalem—a formula of prayer previously composed while the impression made by the sufferings of Christ was still recent. There is an objection made to this last view, namely, that the state of things pictured in vers. 29, 30 limits the prayer to the present emergency; but surely the storm of danger and persecution which then was threatening shortly to break over the little church must have seemed ever imminent to a company of men whose life-work it was to preach the religion of a crucified malefactor. It is a beautiful thought which sees in these solemn words, where an unshaken, a deathless faith shines through the gloom of present and coming sorrow, a fragment of the oldest Christian liturgy. This formula of prayer was, as some have well termed it, a flower which grew up in its strange sweet beauty under the cross, and shows us how perfect was the confidence, how child-like the trust in the Almighty arm, of these first brave confessors of Jesus.

**Lord, thou art the God which hast made heaven and earth.** How feeble, after all, was the power of high priest and Sanhedrim compared with that of their Master, the Creator of all!

**Ver. 25. Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said.** The quotation which follows is from Ps. ii. 1, 2. The words are taken verbatim from the Septuagint. There is no superscription either in the Hebrew or the Septuagint version; but the older interpreters, especially the Jewish, referred it to David.

**Ver. 26. The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his anointed.** The 2d Psalm, the first two verses of which are woven into the earliest fragment we possess of Christian public worship, was interpreted originally by the Jews as referring to King Messiah. Only in later times, when the well-known circumstances of the history of Jesus of Nazareth seemed so exactly to correspond to what the Psalm relates of the 'Anointed of Jehovah,' Jewish learned men tried to do away with the received Messianic interpretation, which they were obliged at the same time to confess was originally admitted generally. Rabbi D. Kimchi, for instance, says: 'According to the interpretation of some, "the Anointed" is King Messiah, and so our blessed Rabbis have expounded it.' Raschi makes the same statement as to the ancient interpretation, and then adds how in his opinion it is better to keep to the literal sense, and to explain it of David himself, *that we may be able to answer the heretics, i.e. Christians.* In the mind of the writer of the Psalm at first an earthly king is present, and the circumstances of his own (David's) chequered career supply the imagery; 'but his words are too great to have all their meaning exhausted in David or any Jewish monarch. Or ever he is aware, the local and the temporal are swallowed up in the universal and eternal. The king who sits on David's throne has become glori-

fiel and transfigured in the light of the promise. The picture is half ideal, half actual; it concerns itself with the present, but with that only so far as it is typical of greater things to come. The true king, who to the prophet's mind is to fulfil all his largest hopes, has taken the place of the visible and earthly king. The nations are not merely those who are now mustering for the battle, but whatsoever opposeth and exalteth itself against Jehovah and against His Anointed' (Dean Perowne, *Introd. to Ps. ii.*).

There is an exact correspondence between the leading enemies mentioned in the Psalm, who arose against the Lord and His Anointed, and those who were present at the scenes of the condemnation and death of Jesus. The heathen (or Gentiles) were represented by the Roman soldiery and officials of the great Gentile empire; the people, by Israel. The kings of the earth, by king Herod; the rulers, by Pontius Pilate the governor. The Lord in the Psalm corresponds to the Maker of heaven and earth, to whom the prayer is addressed; and the Lord's Anointed, to 'Thy holy child Jesus.' There is a very remarkable *Jewish* comment (see Perowne on this Psalm) on the words, *against Jehovah and against His Anointed*, in the *Mechilta* quoted in the *Jalkut Schimoni*: 'Like a robber who was standing and expressing his contempt behind the palace of the king, and saying, If I find the son of the king, I will seize him, and kill him, and crucify him, and put him to a terrible death; but the Holy Spirit mocks at it, and saith, He that dwelleth in the heavens laughs.'

Ver. 27. **In this city.** These words answer to the statement of Ps. ii. 6: '*Upon my holy hill of Zion, I have set my King.*'

Ver. 28. **To do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.** These important words must be connected closely with the foregoing clause, thus: 'Herod and Pontius Pilate, etc., were gathered together to do whatsoever Thy hand and Thy counsel determined before to be done.' Meyer well observes here: 'The Lord's death was not the chance work of arbitrary hate, but, on the contrary, the necessary result of the Divine purpose, which must use man's free acts as its instrument.' The words of *Œcumenius* are to the same purpose: 'They came together as enemies; but they were doing what Thou didst plan.' *Leo i.* writes on this difficult question: 'The Lord did not direct the hands of those raging ones against Himself, but He allowed them to be so directed; nor did He, by His foreknowledge of what would be done, oblige it to be done; nor did He require them to will these things; but He gave them power (so to will) if they pleased.' Wordsworth's three great principles which he lays down as not to be lost sight of in discussions on this and similar texts, are admirable:—

- (1.) That God is the one great First Cause.
- (2.) That He wills that all should act according to the law which He has given them.
- (3.) That it is His will that man's will should be free.

Ver. 29. **And now, Lord, grant that with all boldness they may speak thy word.** It is well worthy of notice in this first great public prayer of the Church, how the Spirit of their Master had sunk into the disciples' hearts. No fire from heaven is called down on the guilty heads of the enemies of Christ, who would stamp out His

struggling Church; only for themselves they pray for bravery and constancy.

Vers. 30, 31. **By stretching forth thine hand to heal.** And the solitary special sign of almighty power which they pray for, is to be able to relieve such suffering among men as they had often seen their Master remove, the power to be able to work such works as Peter and John had performed the afternoon before at the 'Beautiful Gate' of the Temple, when to the hopeless cripple they gave health and strength in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth; and with this name, the earnest pleading of the Church of the first days ceased, and as the murmur of these last words, 'Thy holy child Jesus,' was dying away, the place was shaken where they were assembled together, as though the wings of the descending Spirit had touched the walls and caused the house of prayer to rock, giving this outward sign of His blessed presence. **And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost.** As on the first Pentecost morning, the inward sign was given to these brave confessors too; and they spake the word of God with boldness, and once more the voice of apostles and believers rose from within those holy walls to the sanctuary of the Eternal, but no more in tones of anxious pleading, but exultant and joyous in their new-born hope and confidence, for the first great prayer of the Church of Christ was answered.

#### *The Inner Life of the Church, iv. 32-v. 11.*

The characteristic feature is concord among the believers. The great topic of preaching among them is the Lord's resurrection. The favour they were held in among the people. Their community of goods. Two notable examples of this generosity in giving up all earthly goods are given—(a) that of Barnabas, who became subsequently a famous leader in the Church; (b) that of Ananias and Sapphira, who were punished by death for hypocrisy in this matter, daring to claim from men a reputation for self-denial which the Holy Ghost knew was undeserved.

Ver. 32. **And the multitude of them that believed.** From the personal details connected with the leading followers of Jesus of Nazareth, related in the third and fourth chapters,—from recounting their words, their great miracle, and the persecution which followed,—the historian of the first days of the Church passes to the *inner life* of the new society, and shows how the same quiet peace, the same spirit of self-sacrifice which at first (see chap. ii. 44-47) prevailed, still reigned in the now greatly enlarged community, which now numbered, we are told (chap. iv. 7), 5000 men; and of the inner life of the Church in those early days, the writer of the history dwells on two particulars—(1) the relations of believers one with another; (2) the relation of believers towards the outer world.

**Of one heart and one soul.** This expression was one significant of a close and intimate friendship. A harmony complete and unbroken reigned at first in the Church of Jesus: greed, jealousy, and selfish ambition were unknown as yet in the community, and this enthusiasm of love found its first expression in a voluntary cession of all possessions on the part of each individual believer in favour of the common funds of the society. **Neither said any of them that ought of the things that they possessed was his own, but they had all things common.** The various points connected with the community of goods in the

early Church, the confined area over which the practice extended, the many exceptions to the rule which existed even in the first few years of the Church's history, etc., are discussed in Excursus B of Chapter II. This voluntary poverty was no doubt an attempt on the part of the loving followers of Jesus to imitate as closely as possible the old life they had led while the Master yet walked with them on earth, when they had one purse and all things common. The changed conditions after the ascension, at first they failed to see; the great and varied interests with which they soon became mixed up, the vastly enlarged society, and above all, the absence of the Master, soon rendered impracticable the continuance of a way of life to which they were attached by such sweet and never-to-be-forgotten memories. It is clear, then, that this was an attempt to graft the principle of a community of goods on the Church of Christ—an attempt which utterly failed in practice, and which was given up altogether after a very short experience. This is indisputable, for we find all the epistles written upon the supposition that the varied orders of master and slave, of rich and poor, continued to exist side by side in the Christian community.

The rigid and unswerving truthfulness of the author of the 'Acts,' in dwelling upon this grave mistake of the first years, seems to have escaped general notice. Long before the 'Acts' were edited, the error was acknowledged and corrected; yet St. Luke makes no attempt to conceal or even to gloss over the mistaken zeal of those brave apostles and martyrs who laid so well and so faithfully the early stories of the great Christian Temple.

And this uncompromising truthfulness runs through the entire history; the early chapters tell us of the short-sighted policy which loved to dream of equality among men; the memoirs, as they proceed, conceal nothing: they tell us of the jealous disputes among the poor converts, the Greek and Hebrew Jews, the persecuting rage, the youthful ambition of Paul of Tarsus, the favouritism of Barnabas, the weakness and timidity of Mark, the narrow sectarian spirit of Peter. Nothing is veiled; the same calm unimpassioned hand writes in the same section of the glories and the shame of the early Church; then, as now, we see darkness alternating with light; we feel we are indeed reading a true history.

Ver. 33. **And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus.** These words speak of the relations of the Church with the outer world; the powerful and effective eloquence of the apostolic preaching was not, as some have suggested, merely working within the comparatively narrow pale of the believers: the writer of these brief early memoirs would hardly dwell on the power of the preaching *within* the Church. It was doubtless the solemn answer to the congregation's solemn (and, we believe, often repeated) prayer (see ver. 29); and we may think of these devoted men, day after day in the thronged Temple courts, the popular favour supporting them, speaking their blessed message for a time unhindered. 'The resurrection of the Lord Jesus is again and again mentioned as the groundwork of the apostolic teaching; it was the column upon which their strong patient faith rested;

they knew they had seen their Master after He had risen; they told it out to others that men might grasp the mighty issues which this victory of Jesus over death involved for every man and woman.'

**And great grace was upon them all.** Expositors have differed respecting the meaning of the 'great grace' here alluded to. Is it (a) the 'grace of God'? does it mean that the Divine favour was abundantly shown to the apostles? Or (b) does it signify that these devoted teachers found favour among the people? (b) seems decidedly the better interpretation; for, first, the word *grace* distinctly bears this meaning in chap. ii. 4; and second, it is obvious that the 'grace of God' was upon the apostles and brethren: they were filled, we read, with the Holy Ghost (ver. 31). Verse 33 speaks of the great power of the apostolic preaching. There was scarcely any need for the writer of the 'Acts' specially to mention, further, how God's favour was resting upon them; but the fact of their standing high in popular estimation was an important one: it showed under whose protection and by whose favour their public preaching and work went on after the threats of the supreme council (see vers. 18, 21, 29; comp. also chap. v. 12-14).

Vers. 34, 35. **And brought the prices of the things that were sold, And laid them at the apostles' feet.** We have here one of the few expressions in the New Testament where the personal dignity and rank which the apostles held in the community of the believers is directly mentioned (comp. Cicero, *Pro Flacco*, c. 28, where we read how a sum of money was laid at the Prætor's feet in the Forum). The apostles, like the Roman magistrates, probably sat amongst their own people on a raised seat, on the steps of which, at their feet, the money thus devoted for the service of the Lord's people was laid in token of respect. This seems to have been the customary way of the solemn dedication of property to the use of the Church, as it is mentioned again in the case of Barnabas (ver. 37).

Ver. 36. **And Joseph, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas.** This is given as one of the more famous instances of this giving up houses and lands for the Lord's sake. Clement of Alexandria tells us this Barnabas, a Levite of Cyprus, was one of the Lord's seventy disciples. This eloquent and devoted man subsequently became one of the foremost missionaries of Christ. In the vexed question of the authorship of the Epistle to the Hebrews, Barnabas has been by some scholars supposed to have been the writer. The well-known epistle bearing his name, quoted some seven times by Clement of Alexandria, and also by Origen, Jerome, etc., although undoubtedly a monument of the first Christian age, was probably written some time after Barnabas' martyrdom, which took place not later than A.D. 57 (see Hefelé, *Prolegomena Patrum Apost. Opera*).—**Which is, being interpreted, The son of consolation.** The name Barnabas is compounded of two Hebrew words, בֶּרֶךְ נְבוֹנָה, which mean literally, 'the son of prophecy.' The writer of the 'Acts' translates it 'son of consolation' (or exhortation). This name was given him by the apostles, no doubt on account of his rare gifts of speech and powers of exhortation.

**A Levite, and of the country of Cyprus,**

(37) **Having land, sold it.** The land sold might have been situated in Cyprus; but this supposition is hardly necessary, for we know that even priests might hold land in the later days of the kingdom

of Israel (see Jer. xxxii. 7). On the return from the captivity, it was still more unlikely that the old restrictions of the Mosaic Law regarding heritages could be observed.

## CHAPTER V.

*Internal Dangers of the Early Church—The Episode of Ananias and Sapphira—Progress of the Church—Second Arrest of the Apostles—Defence of Peter—Its Effect on Gamaliel and the Sanhedrim—The Apostles are scourged and then liberated.*

- 1 **B**UT a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife,  
 2 sold a possession, And <sup>a</sup>kept back *part* of the price, his <sup>a</sup>Ver. 3;  
 wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and <sup>Tit. ii. 10 in</sup>  
 3 <sup>the Gk</sup> laid it at the apostles' feet. But Peter said, Ananias, why <sup>b</sup>Ch. iv. 35, 37.  
 hath <sup>c</sup>Satan <sup>d</sup>filled thine heart to lie to <sup>e</sup>the Holy Ghost,<sup>1</sup> and <sup>c</sup>See Lu. xxii.  
 4 to <sup>d</sup>keep back *part* of the price of the land? Whiles it re- <sup>d</sup>Eccl. viii. 11.  
 mained, was it not thine own?<sup>2</sup> and after it was sold, was it not  
 in thine own power? why hast thou <sup>e</sup>conceived this thing in <sup>e</sup>So Dan. i. 8;  
 thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but <sup>f</sup>unto God. <sup>Hag. ii. 18</sup>  
 5 And Ananias hearing these words <sup>f</sup>fell down, and gave up the <sup>(Heb. and</sup>  
 ghost: <sup>g</sup>and great fear came on all them that heard these <sup>Gk.). See</sup>  
 6 things. <sup>h</sup>And the young men arose, <sup>i</sup>wound him up,<sup>3</sup> and <sup>J. u. i. 66.</sup>  
 7 carried him out, and buried him. And it was about the space <sup>So ch. xix.</sup>  
 of three hours after, when his wife, not knowing what was done, <sup>21 (Gk.).</sup>  
 8 came in. And Peter <sup>j</sup>answered unto her, Tell me whether ye <sup>k</sup>Cp. vv. 3, 9  
 sold the land for so much?. And she said, Yea, for so much. <sup>and 1 Cor. iii.</sup>  
 9 Then Peter <sup>l</sup>said unto her, How *is it* that ye have agreed <sup>16 with Mat.</sup>  
 together to <sup>m</sup>tempt <sup>n</sup>the Spirit of the Lord? behold, <sup>xxviii. 19;</sup>  
 of them which have buried thy husband *are* at the door, and <sup>Jo. xv. 26;</sup>  
 10 shall carry thee out. Then <sup>o</sup>fell she <sup>p</sup>down straightway at his <sup>2 Cor. xiii. 14.</sup>  
 feet, and <sup>q</sup>yielded up the ghost: and <sup>r</sup>the young men came in, <sup>Ver. 10 (Gk.).</sup>  
 and found her dead, and, carrying *her* forth, buried *her* by her <sup>Cp. Ezek.</sup>  
 11 husband. <sup>s</sup>And great fear came upon all the church, and upon <sup>xi. 13.</sup>  
 as many as heard <sup>t</sup>these things. <sup>A Ver. 11. See</sup>  
 12 And <sup>u</sup>by the hands of the apostles were many <sup>v</sup>signs and <sup>ch. ii. 43.</sup>  
 wonders wrought among the people; (and they were all <sup>w</sup>with <sup>So ver. 10.</sup>  
 13 one accord in <sup>x</sup>Solomon's porch. And of the rest <sup>y</sup>durst no <sup>So Ezek.</sup>  
 man join himself to them: but <sup>z</sup>the people magnified them. <sup>xxix. 5; ch.</sup>  
 14 And believers were the more <sup>aa</sup>added to the Lord, multitudes <sup>viii. 2? Cp.</sup>  
 15 both of men and women;) Insomuch that *they* brought forth <sup>Jo. xix. 40.</sup>  
 the sick into the streets, and laid *them* on beds and couches, <sup>Ch. iii. 12,</sup>  
<sup>x. 46. See</sup>  
<sup>Judg. xviii.</sup>  
<sup>14.</sup>  
<sup>Cp. ch. xv.</sup>  
<sup>10.</sup>  
<sup>Isa. lii. 7;</sup>  
<sup>Nahum i. 15.</sup>

<sup>1</sup> or the Holy Spirit  
<sup>2</sup> wrapped him round  
<sup>3</sup> and she fell

<sup>4</sup> did it not remain thine own  
<sup>5</sup> But Peter  
<sup>6</sup> the whole church, and upon all that heard

<sup>a</sup> See ch. ii. 47

that at the least <sup>v</sup> the shadow of Peter passing by <sup>7</sup> might over-  
 16 shadow some of them. There came also a multitude *out* of the  
 cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing <sup>w</sup> sick *folks*, and  
*them which were* <sup>w</sup> vexed with unclean spirits: and they were  
 healed every one.  
 17 Then <sup>\*</sup> the high priest <sup>\*</sup> rose up, and all they that were with  
 him, (which is the sect of the <sup>7</sup> Sadducees,) and were filled with  
 18 indignation, And <sup>\*</sup> laid their hands on the apostles, and put  
 19 them in the common <sup>\*</sup> prison. But <sup>b</sup> the angel of the Lord <sup>\*</sup> by  
 night <sup>c</sup> opened the prison doors, and brought them forth, and  
 20 said, Go, stand and speak <sup>d</sup> in the temple to the people all <sup>e</sup> the  
 21 words of this life. And when they heard *that*, they entered  
<sup>f</sup> into the temple <sup>e</sup> early in the morning, and taught. <sup>\*</sup> But the  
 high priest came, and they that were with him, and called <sup>i</sup> the  
 council together, and all the senate of the children of Israel,  
 22 and sent to the prison to have them brought. But when the  
<sup>\*</sup> officers came, and found them not in the prison, they returned,  
 23 and told, Saying, The prison truly found we shut with all  
 safety, and the keepers standing without <sup>10</sup> before the doors:  
 24 but when we had opened, we found no *man* within. Now when  
 the <sup>i</sup> high priest <sup>11</sup> and the <sup>w</sup> captain of the temple and the chief  
 priests heard these things, they <sup>\*</sup> doubted of them whereunto  
 25 this would grow. Then came <sup>12</sup> one and told them, saying,  
 Behold, the men whom ye put in prison are standing <sup>f</sup> in the  
 26 temple, and teaching the people. Then went the <sup>w</sup> captain with  
 the <sup>\*</sup> officers, and brought them without violence: <sup>o</sup> for they  
 27 feared the people, lest they should have been stoned. And  
 when they had brought them, they set *them* before <sup>i</sup> the council:  
 28 and the high priest asked them, Saying, <sup>\*</sup> Did not we straitly  
 command you that *ye* should not teach in this name? and  
 behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and <sup>q</sup> in-  
 29 tend to bring <sup>13</sup> this man's <sup>r</sup> blood upon us. Then Peter <sup>14</sup> and  
 the *other* apostles answered and said, <sup>\*</sup> We ought to obey God <sup>15</sup>  
 30 rather than men. <sup>\*</sup> The God of our fathers <sup>\*</sup> raised up Jesus,  
 31 <sup>r</sup> whom ye slew and <sup>w</sup> hanged on a tree. Him hath God  
 exalted <sup>\*</sup> with his right hand <sup>16</sup> to be <sup>r</sup> a Prince and <sup>\*</sup> a Saviour,  
 for to give <sup>\*</sup> repentance to Israel, and <sup>b</sup> forgiveness of sins.  
 32 And <sup>c</sup> we are his witnesses of these things; and *so is* also the  
 Holy Ghost, <sup>17</sup> <sup>d</sup> whom God hath given to them that obey  
 him.

<sup>v</sup> See Mat.  
xiv. 36.  
<sup>w</sup> Mk. xvi. 17.  
18. Cp.  
Jo. xiv. 12.  
<sup>x</sup> Ch. iv. 1, 2,  
5, 6.  
<sup>y</sup> See Mat.  
xxii. 23. Cp.  
Jo. xii. 10.  
<sup>z</sup> See Lu. xxi.  
12.  
<sup>a</sup> Ch. iv. 3.  
(Gk.). Not  
as ver. 19,  
etc.  
<sup>b</sup> See ch. xii. 7.  
<sup>c</sup> Ch. xvi. 26.  
<sup>d</sup> So ch. xii. 10.  
<sup>e</sup> See ch. ii. 46.  
<sup>f</sup> Jo. vi. 63, 68.  
So Jo. xvii. 3;  
1 Jo. v. 12.  
Cp. Phil. ii.  
16.  
<sup>g</sup> Vv. 20, 25, 42;  
Jo. viii. 2.  
<sup>h</sup> Jo. viii. 2.  
<sup>i</sup> Ch. iv. 5, 6.  
<sup>j</sup> Vv. 27, 34,  
41. See  
Mat. v. 22.  
<sup>k</sup> Ver. 26. See  
Mat. xxvi.  
58.  
<sup>l</sup> Gk. not as  
ver. 27.  
<sup>m</sup> Ver. 26.  
<sup>n</sup> See Lu. ix. 7.  
<sup>o</sup> See ch. iv.  
21. Cp.  
Lu. xx. 19.  
<sup>p</sup> Ch. iv. 18.  
<sup>q</sup> So ch. ii. 23;  
36, iii. 14, 15.  
Cp. ch. vii.  
52.  
<sup>r</sup> Mat. xxiii.  
35, xxvii. 25.  
<sup>s</sup> So ch. iv. 19.  
<sup>t</sup> See Ex. i. 17.  
<sup>u</sup> Ch. iii. 13.  
xxii. 14.  
<sup>v</sup> See ch. ii. 24.  
<sup>w</sup> So ch. x. 39.  
Rather as  
ch. ii. 23.  
<sup>x</sup> Gal. iii. 13.  
So ch. xiii.  
29; 1 Pet. ii.  
24.  
<sup>y</sup> Rather as  
ch. ii. 33.  
<sup>z</sup> See ch. iii. 15.  
<sup>a</sup> Lu. ii. 11;  
ch. xiii. 23.  
<sup>b</sup> Lu. xxiv. 47.  
So ch. iii. 26.  
<sup>c</sup> Lu. xxiv. 47.  
So ch. iii. 26;  
Lu. i. 77.  
(Gk.); ch. x.  
43 (Gk.), xiii.  
38, xxvi. 18;  
Eph. i. 7;  
Col. i. 14.  
<sup>d</sup> See Lu. xxiv.  
48.  
<sup>e</sup> Ch. ii. 4.

<sup>7</sup> that as Peter came by at least his shadow

<sup>8</sup> But the high priest

<sup>9</sup> an angel of the Lord

<sup>10</sup> The older authorities omit without.

<sup>11</sup> But when the priest. The older authorities, however, omit the words altogether.

<sup>12</sup> And then came

<sup>13</sup> with your teaching, and wish to bring

<sup>14</sup> But Peter

<sup>15</sup> We must obey God

<sup>16</sup> or to his right hand

<sup>17</sup> or the Holy Spirit



33 When they heard *that*, they were cut *'to the heart*, and *'took*  
 34 counsel to slay them.<sup>18</sup> Then stood there up<sup>19</sup> one in *'the*  
 council, a Pharisee, named *'Gamaliel*, *'a doctor of the law*, had  
 in reputation among all the people, and commanded to put the  
 35 apostles<sup>20</sup> forth a little space; And said unto them, Ye men of  
 Israel, *'take heed to yourselves what ye intend to do as touch-*  
 36 *ing these men.* For *'before these days rose up Theudas*,  
*'boasting himself to be somebody*; <sup>21</sup>to whom a number of  
 men, about four hundred, joined themselves: who was slain;  
 and all, as many as obeyed him, were scattered, and brought to  
 37 nought. After this *man* rose up Judas of Galilee in the days  
 of *'the taxing*,<sup>22</sup> and drew away much people after him:<sup>23</sup> he  
 also perished; and all, *even* as many as obeyed him, were dis-  
 38 persed. And now I say unto you, Refrain from these men, and  
 let them alone: *'for if this counsel or this work be of men*, it  
 39 will come to nought:<sup>24</sup> But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow  
 40 it; lest haply ye be found even *'to fight against God.* And to  
 him they agreed: and when they had *'called the apostles*, and  
*'beaten them*, they *'commanded that they should not speak in*  
 41 *the name of Jesus*, and let them go. And they departed from  
 the presence of *'the council*, *'rejoicing that they were 'counted*  
 42 *worthy to suffer shame for his name.*<sup>25</sup> And daily *'in the*  
 temple, and in every house,<sup>26</sup> *'they ceased not to teach and*  
*'preach Jesus Christ.*

<sup>18</sup> and wished to slay them

<sup>19</sup> But there stood up

<sup>20</sup> The older authorities read 'the men' in place of 'apostles.'

<sup>21</sup> giving himself out to be somebody

<sup>22</sup> in the days of the enrolment

<sup>23</sup> The older authorities read '(some of the) people after him.'

<sup>24</sup> it will be overthrown

<sup>25</sup> The older authorities only read 'for the name.'

<sup>26</sup> or and at home.

*Expressed*  
*ch. vi. 54.*  
*Cp. ch. ii. 37*  
*J. Jo. xii. 10*  
*(Gk.).*  
*Ver. 21.*  
*Ch. xxiii. 3.*  
*See Lu. v. 17*

*See Lu. xvii.*  
*3.*  
*Cp. ch. xxi.*  
*38.*  
*So ch. viii. 9*  
*(Gk.). Cp.*  
*Gal. ii. 6,*  
*vi. 3.*

*See Lu. ii. 2.*

*See Prov.*  
*xxi. 30.*

*Ch. xxiii. 9.*  
*So 2 Chron.*  
*xiii. 12. Cp.*  
*Jer. xxvi. 19;*  
*ch. xi. 17.*  
*So ch. iv. 28.*

*See Mat.*  
*xxi. 35.*  
*See Mat. v.*  
*12 So*  
*ch. xiii. 52;*  
*1 Pet. iv. 13.*  
*16. Cp.*  
*Phil. i. 21.*  
*See Lu. xx.*  
*35.*

*See ch. ii. 46*  
*Ch. iv. 20, 29.*  
*Ch. viii. 35,*  
*xi. 20, xvii.*  
*18. So ch.*  
*xv. 35.*

#### *The Episode of Ananias and Sapphira, I-II.*

Vers. 1, 2. But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession, and kept back part of the price. In striking contrast to the entire self-abnegation of some of the richer brethren, of whom Barnabas was an example, appears the conduct of another of the wealthier converts, Ananias. 'The history of the infant Church has presented hitherto an image of unsullied light; it is now for the first time that a shadow falls upon it. We can imagine that among the first Christians a kind of holy emulation had sprung up: all were eager to make over their superfluous wealth to the Church. This zeal now seems to have carried away some, in whose hearts still lingered a love for earthly things. Such an one was Ananias, who secretly kept back part of the price he had received for property (which he had devoted to God's service). Vanity was the motive for the sale, hypocrisy the motive of the concealment. He coveted the reputation of appearing as disinterested as others, and yet could not let go his hold of mammon' (from Olshausen).

Special circumstances surround the sin of these two unhappy ones, whose guilt met with so prompt and terrible a punishment. We must remember that the early Church, strong and enduring as it proved itself to be, in those first days stood alone and defenceless, while the hands of all, seemingly, were against it. The secret of its strength lay in the faith of its members in the Risen One—a faith which nothing could shake; in their perfect trust in the guidance and presence among them of the Holy Ghost; in the sure confidence that, though they as individuals might not, probably would not, live to see it, the triumph of their Master's cause was certain. Now Ananias—partly, perhaps, persuaded that this new sect had before it a great future, and wishing to secure his own share in its coming prosperity; partly, perhaps, moved by genuine admiration for its pure saintly life—voluntarily threw in his lot with these Nazarenes, and by a seemingly noble act of self-denial, claimed the position among them which was ever promptly given to those saintly men and women who had given up lands and gold for Christ's sake. In his heart, however, a lingering doubt remained whether perhaps, after all, the whole story might not be a

delusion; so, while professedly stripping himself of his possessions, he kept back enough of his worldly wealth to secure himself in the event of the dispersion and breaking up of the communion of the Nazarenes.

Ananias *knew* he could deceive men; he believed so little in that Almighty Spirit who guided and inspired the little church of Christ, that he dreamed he could deceive, too, that Holy Ghost.

Ver. 3. **But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost?** It was in the solemn assembly of the believers for prayer and counsel, Peter and the twelve no doubt sitting on their raised chairs (see note on chap. iv. 35), when Ananias presented his rich offering. We are not directly told how Peter obtained his information respecting the fraud; still, we can have no doubt of the source: it was no earthly presence which guided and executed the dread judgment of that court.

In Peter's question to Ananias, 'Why hath Satan filled thine heart?' two points claim a special comment: (1) The foremost of the Twelve, who had learned his doctrine from the life of Jesus, distinctly here acknowledges his belief in the existence and personality of the spirit of evil, Satan; (2) By his question, 'Why,' etc., he evidently recognises man's free will, his power to resist if he choose, the promptings of the evil one.

Ver. 4. **Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power?** All this shows that this community of goods was purely voluntary; even in the Church of Jerusalem it was required of no member. 'If you were unwilling to sell (your possession), who compelled you? if you wished to offer but the half, who required the whole?' (Augustine, Sermon cxlviii.).

**Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.** The doctrine of the early Church on the subject of the Holy Ghost is plainly declared in the words of this and the preceding verse. The *personality* of the blessed Spirit is assumed by the words of ver. 3, and from ver. 4 we gather that, in the esteem of St. Peter, the Holy Ghost *was God*. In the first question Peter asks, 'Why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost?' In reference to the same offence, in verse 4 his words are, 'Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.' To lie to the Holy Ghost is not to lie unto men, because the Holy Ghost is not man, but to lie unto God, because the Holy Ghost is God (see Pearson, art. viii.).

Ver. 5. **And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost.** In considering the questions which cluster round this terrible death scene, we must put aside all such interpretations which ascribe 'the death' to what is termed natural causes. It was no stroke of apoplexy, the result of sudden terror and amazement. It was occasioned by no shock to the nervous system; for even if the supposition could be entertained in the case of Ananias, it would at once break down when the circumstances attending the death of Sapphira were examined into. In both instances the end must be regarded as a direct Divine interposition, by which a speedy and terrible punishment was inflicted; and the same God who revealed to Peter the secret sin, enabling him to read the hearts of the two unhappy ones, now directed him to pronounce words which, in the case of Ananias, were immediately followed by

death—which, in the case of Sapphira, were an awful prediction derived from the inspiration of the Spirit, that, as she too had committed a like deadly sin and persevered in it, her own death was at hand.

Much bitter criticism has been wasted on this gloomy incident from the days of Porphyry, sixteen centuries ago, to our time; the judgment pronounced and executed upon the unhappy pair has been condemned, now as a needless cruelty on the part of Peter, now as an inexplicable act of Divine revenge: the obligation to defend it has been stigmatized as one of the saddest duties of an apologist (comp. De Wette, *Erklärung der Apostelgeschichte*, pp. 69-71, 4th ed.; S. Jerome, *Reply to Porphyry*, epist. 97). Wordsworth observes how, on the 'first promulgation of God's laws, any breach of them has been generally punished in a signal and awful manner, for the sake of example and prevention of sin, and for punishment of sin. So it was now in the case of Ananias on the first effusion of the Holy Spirit, and at the first preaching of the gospel. So it was in the case of Uzzah touching the ark when about to be placed on Mount Zion (2 Sam. iv. 6-12). So it was in the case of the man who gathered sticks on the Sabbath day, at the first publication of the Decalogue' (Num. xv. 32-36).

Had not Ananias and Sapphira 'been cut off from the congregation,' had their gifts been accepted, and they as saints been admitted with respect and admiration into the congregation, a new spirit would have crept into the little Church. As the real history of the transaction began to be whispered abroad, a new-born distrust in the Holy Ghost, who had allowed the apostles to be so deceived, would have sprung up. The advantage of serving two masters—the world and Christ—would have dawned on the mind of many a believer as a possibility. The first fervour of the new-born faith would have become dulled, and that mighty strength in weakness we wonder at and admire with such ungrudging admiration in the Church of the first days would rapidly have become enervated, would in the end have withered away; and the little community itself might well have faded and perished, and made no sign, had not the glorious ARM been stretched out in mercy to the righteous and the guilty.

Now, did the punishment end here? Swept out of life, leaving behind them a name of shame, was this the close? Could the All-merciful take them to His home? or, fearful thought, was the death for eternity as well as for time? Such a question, perhaps, anywhere but in this solitary instance, when death was in a peculiar manner the judgment of the Almighty, would be presumptuous and worse than useless. Theologians have given varied opinions here. One, perhaps the greatest who ever lived, replies to the question, it seems, with words of great truth and beauty, arguing against the charge of extreme severity so often urged against the Almighty Head of that little Church. Augustine quotes St. Paul's words concerning offenders in the Corinthian Church, many of whom he said were weak and sickly, and many sleep, that is, *die*, thus chastened by the scourge of the Lord, that they may escape being condemned with the world. And something of this kind happened, said Augustine, to this man and his wife: they were chastened with death that they might not be punished eternally. We must

believe after this life God will have spared them, for great is His mercy. One well worthy of being heard has echoed Augustine's words in our own day: 'Will these two be shut out of heaven? We may hope even these may come in, though perhaps with bowed heads.'

**And great fear came on all them that heard these things.** The 'great fear' refers only to the 'first death,' that of Ananias. It does not relate, as De Wette and Alford urge, to that general feeling of awe which came not only over the Church, but affected also many who were outside its pale. This statement simply speaks of the solemn feeling excited in the assembly of the faithful, where we know the judgment of God fell upon Ananias.

**Ver. 6. And the young men arose.** These young men probably occupied in the Church some authorized official position. As yet to look for a definite organization in the little community, would be of course premature; yet it is in the highest degree probable that the earliest Christian worship was modelled upon the synagogue, with such modifications as the position held by the apostles and perhaps the 'seventy' would require. The place the apostles evidently occupied at these meetings of the brethren (see note on chap. iv. 35), the strong probability that definite forms of prayer were already introduced as a part at least of their worship, the prompt and orderly acts which followed immediately upon the terrible event just discussed—all point to a simple order and discipline reigning from the first among the new congregations.

**Wrapped him round.** This seems the best and most accurate rendering. The officials whose duty it was to arrange the details of these meetings of the believers, reverently took up the poor body, and hastily,—as is ever the custom in the East in the case of death,—but reverentially, *wrapped round* each limb with the linen cloths used in the burying of the dead, sprinkling spices between each fold of the linen. Other translations have been proposed, the best of which renders 'placed together,' 'laid out'—that is, that the stiffening limbs were composed (Meyer); the Vulgate reads *amoverunt*, which the older English Versions appear to have followed in their renderings, 'moved away' (Wickliffe); 'put apart' (Tyndale, Cranmer); 'removed' (Rheims).

**And carried him out.** The Jews did not bury, except in special cases, within the walls of their cities. This accounts for the long interval of time (three hours) which elapsed before the young men who had carried Ananias to his grave without the city, returned.

**And buried him.** In the East the usual custom is only to allow a few hours' interval between death and burial. In the Jerusalem of our day we read it is the practice not to defer burial as a general rule more than three or four hours after decease.

**Ver. 7. And it was about the space of three hours after, when his wife.** The words 'about the space of three hours' form a parenthesis. Then 'it came to pass—some three hours had now elapsed—when his wife.' She was puzzled at the long absence of her husband, who had left her to present his rich gift formally to the Church, and she was anxious, no doubt, to learn with what grateful words of acceptance the apostles had received it.

**Not knowing what was done.** No one, it has been suggested, who had seen her, as yet had had the courage to tell her of her husband's doom.

**Came in.** A second assembly of the Church might have been sitting, if the Jewish hours of prayer were rigidly attended to; but it is more likely that the apostles, and many with them, remained in the same house during the whole interval of the three hours' absence of the young men who were charged with carrying out the burial details.

**Ver. 8. And Peter answered unto her.** Her entrance into the assembly of saints, where one sad thought was present in each one's heart, was, as Bengel happily says, equivalent to her speaking. So Peter, looking at her, answers her mute look of inquiry, her voiceless question, with the words, **Tell me whether ye sold the land for so much?** pointing at the same time to the pile of gold Ananias had laid at his feet three hours before. 'Was it for so much?'—naming the sum given him by her husband—'that ye sold the land for?' Now, even in this supreme moment, had she possessed the noble courage to confess the truth, she had been saved; but she held steadfastly to the same miserable deceit, and in the presence of the Church and of the apostles of that Lord she professed to love so well, repeated the lie, 'Yea, for so much.'

**Ver. 9. How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord?** This evidently in the apostle's mind is a serious aggravation of their guilt. They had agreed together to do this thing. It was no sin committed hastily, but one thought over and planned—a preconcerted scheme to deceive that loving Master whom they professed to serve as their God. It was as though they wished to test the omniscience of the Holy Spirit. Could, then, that God who ruled so visibly in His chosen servants be tricked?

**Behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door.** 'Behold.' The voice and gesture calling attention to the sound of the entering in at the door of the room or hall where they were sitting, of the young men who had just returned, having completed their sad office. The apostle's words told the whole story to the unhappy woman. In a moment she saw the Spirit who ruled in that Church could not be mocked. It was all real and true.

**Ver. 10. And the young men came in, and found her dead.** The death of the wife was instantaneous, and took place exactly as the words of Peter had foretold. She lay dead in the midst of the assembly, and the young men who had just returned from the grave of Ananias laid her in that same sad evening by his side.

**Ver. 11. And great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things.** Within and without the story was told. On the Church, in all the city and neighbourhood, on many an indifferent and careless citizen outside the Church's pale, fell the shadow of that great fear—fear, however, in its best and noblest sense better, perhaps, expressed as 'a deep awe.' 'The rulers of the Jews,' says Bengel, 'without doubt heard of these things, and yet they did not institute proceedings on that account against Peter.' The immediate effect within and without was one of the ends which the terrible judgment was intended to produce; it was not meant as an example of the way in which the varied communities of the Church of Jesus were to be governed in the future. As in the older dispensation the fire which consumed Nadab and Abihu burned no more after that first awful judgment, and the

earth which opened to swallow up Korah and his impious company remained for ever closed, though seemingly worse acts dishonoured the Land of Promise, so the deaths of Ananias and Sapphira were never repeated: the mercy, not the severity of God, was henceforth shown to those men who professed His high service, and at times, alas! dishonoured it, in a way less visibly awful.

Such an event was in fact only possible then, in those first days, in the early morning of the faith, when the Spirit of the Lord ever dwelt with the disciples, when still every thought and act and word was prompted and guided by His sweet and blessed influence—only possible when the old world love of self, bringing cheerless doubt and accursed deceit in its train, *for the first time* polluted that holy atmosphere.

The name *Ananias* is the same as *Ananiah* mentioned in the catalogue of the builders of the wall of Jerusalem (Neh. iii. 23), and signifies the 'cloud of gold,' or possibly is identical with *Hananiah*, one of the companions of Daniel (Dan. i. 6). The meaning of *Hananiah* is 'mercy of God.' *Sapphira* is derived from the Greek *σάπφειρος*, *sapphire*, or directly from the Syriac *שִׁפְרָא*, *beautiful*.

*A Further Picture of the Progress of the Church.*  
—*The Power of St. Peter in those First Days,*  
12-16.

The relations of the little Church towards the *outside* world are now dwelt on. Already we have seen how all public teaching in the name of Jesus was strictly forbidden, and in chap. iv. 31 we are told how the brethren determined to disregard the prohibition. The present description gives us a picture of the manner in which Peter and his companions carried on their work; and for a time there was no interruption, the popular feeling being so strong in their favour.

Ver. 12. **And by the hands of the apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people.** Notwithstanding the great fear which came over the Church after the terrible event just recorded, the apostles seem to have pressed on their work with greater enthusiasm than before, and with marked success. The miracles of healing performed among the people were the credentials these plain unlettered men had received from their Lord, then reigning from His glory throne in heaven, and were in striking contrast with the scenes of terror the Church had just witnessed. The terror men might see was something strange and unusual, while the mercy and love were the everyday characteristics of the Master of these new teachers. The signs and wonders here referred to are described at greater length in vers. 15, 16.

**And they were all with one accord in Solomon's porch.** Ver. 13. **And of the rest durst no man join himself to them: but the people magnified them.** Thus, while the apostles were busied in their work of healing and teaching, using for the purpose of spreading the knowledge of their Master's kingdom the extraordinary powers their Master had for a time entrusted them with, the great mass of believers would meet together at different hours in the great cloistered court of the Temple, called Solomon's Porch. There great companies of these believers in Jesus would thus meet, no one hindering them, no one crowding them or listening with jealous ears to their words. Those who made up the crowds who usually

thronged those courts, left them alone, reverently keeping away from the groups of the followers of Jesus, the people generally regarding them with a kind of fear mingled with admiration.

Without hesitation we have thus adopted that explanation which gives to the word '*all*' (ver. 12) the meaning of *all the believers*, and to the words '*of the rest*' (ver. 13) the meaning of *all who were not believers*—that is, the people generally.

Many great expositors have, however, preferred to understand by '*all*' (ver. 12), *the apostles only*—not all the Christians, as the apostles are the subject of the paragraph, and have regarded the words of ver. 13 as added, to show with what reverence the Twelve were generally looked upon by the people.

The words '*of the rest*,' some scholars understand to mean '*all else*, whether believers or unbelievers;' some, believers only; and they go on to explain the passage (ver. 13) thus: 'None of the rest, whether believers or unbelievers, ventured to equal themselves to the apostles. They kept at a distance from them, regarding them as an isolated group, as superhuman, as beings distinct from them.'

Others, again, restrict the expression '*of the rest*' to the rich and noble, terrified by the death of Ananias, who belonged to their order. Gloag believes the meaning of ver. 13 to be, 'that none of the rest of the people ventured on false pretences to unite themselves to the Church: by the death of Ananias an effectual stop was put to hypocrisy for the time;' but the exposition we have adopted above is the easiest and most obvious. It is adopted in the main by Ewald and Meyer. It is, too, the view most in accordance with the simplicity of early Christian tradition, which resolutely sets itself against all unnatural separation of ranks and orders. What could be more contrary to the ordinary loving intercourse between the apostles and their disciples,—between Paul, for instance, and his loved converts of Philippi,—than a statement which represents the apostles as an isolated group, fenced off from the mass of believers in the Lord Jesus, who kept themselves at a distance from them, looking on them as superhuman?

Ver. 14. **And believers were the more added to the Lord.** This statement confirms the exposition given above of the words, '*Of the rest durst no man join himself to them.*' A sense of religious awe kept the crowds who thronged the Temple courts and the people generally from intruding upon them and disturbing them when they met together; but multitudes of both sexes, impressed with the truth of what the apostles were preaching, kept joining the ranks of the believers, and were added to the Lord. The numbers were now so great that the historian of the Acts no longer gives them, as had been his practice on each of the three previous descriptions of the Church's progress, chap. i. 15, ii. 41, iv. 4.

**Multitudes both of men and women.** This is one of several special mentions in the history of the early Church of women.

Ver. 15. **Into the streets.** Those between the apostles' house and the Temple. The whole scene of growing admiration and respect for the persons of these brave and earnest teachers, who enforced their burning words with such mighty loving acts, reminds us of a still greater enthusiasm excited by the Master of Peter and his companions (see Mark ii. 1, 2, vi. 55, 56).

**The shadow of Peter.** Peter especially is mentioned as the greatest and foremost of the apostles in all work and preaching in those early days. At this period there is certainly no doubt but that this apostle, both in reality and also in the popular estimation, was the acknowledged chief of the community of believers in Jesus.

On the much-disputed question respecting the efficacy of the '*shadow of Peter*' falling upon the sick, two points must not be lost sight of—(1) the *reality* of the miracles wrought at this juncture of the Church's history; (2) the *great number* of the miraculous cures which were just then worked; for we read 'how from the city the sick were brought from their houses and laid on beds and couches: and from the cities round about Jerusalem a multitude came, bringing sick folks; and they were healed, every one.' Occurring as it does in the midst of this matter-of-fact relation of a number of cures performed on the persons of the sick of the city and the neighbouring towns, the statement respecting the effect of the '*shadow of Peter*' must not be watered down by an attempt to explain it as an accident existing only in the opinion of the people, or by a suggestion that the author of the Acts makes no assertion whatever respecting the effect of the '*shadow*' falling on the sick. (See Meyer, Lange, and Gloag.) The writer's plain statement is, that some at least of these miraculous cures were effected by Peter's shadow falling upon them as, fervently trusting to be healed, they lay waiting his passing by. Instances of this special form of miracle, where the healing virtue appears to exist in the person, independent of all instruments, are very rare; in the Old Testament, the case of the prophet Elisha stands by itself. In the New Testament, our Lord (Luke viii. 46), St. Peter in this passage, St. Paul (Acts xix. 12), where the miracles in question are designated as *οὐκ ἐν αὐτοῖς*, the '*rarest*' or '*special*' alone seem to have exercised this peculiar power. Dean Alford has an admirable note here: 'In this and similar narratives (Acts xix. 12), Christian faith finds no difficulty whatever. All miraculous working is an exertion of the direct power of the All-powerful—a suspension by *Him* of His ordinary laws; and whether He will use *any* instrument in doing this, or *what* instrument, must depend altogether on His own purpose in the miracle—the effect to be produced on the recipients, beholders, or hearers. Without His special selection and enabling, *all instruments were vain*; with them, *all are capable*. What is a hand or a voice more than a shadow, except that the analogy of the ordinary instrument is a greater help to faith in the recipient? When faith, as apparently here, did not need this help, the less likely medium was adopted. In this case at Jerusalem, as later with St. Paul at Ephesus, it was His purpose to exalt His apostle as the herald of His Gospel, and to lay in Jerusalem the strong foundation of His Church; and He therefore endues him with this extraordinary power.'

**Ver. 16. With unclean spirits.** The subject of 'demoniacal possession' will be found discussed in chap. xvi. 6.

*Second Arrest of the Apostles.—They are freed by the Interposition of an Angel, 17–25.*

**Ver. 17. Then the high priest rose up.** Not from his throne in the council, for the Sanhedrim is not said to have been sitting. 'Rose up' im-

plies that the high priest, excited and alarmed at the growing power of these followers of the Crucified, determined at once again to try and crush them by violent measures. The high priest is no doubt Annas, as in chap. iv. 6, though his son-in-law Caiaphas nominally filled the office.

**All they that were with him.** These were not his brother judges in the great council, but those who sympathized with him in his bitter hatred of Christ's followers.

**Which is the sect of the Sadducees.** The fact of the resurrection of Jesus had now been made known beyond the walls of the city, and was believed in by ever-increasing multitudes. The fear and anger of the Sadducees were more than ever stirred up. Very many, as we have said (see note on chap. iv. 1), of the most influential of the nation belonged to this sect. Whether Annas himself was a Sadducee is doubtful. We know, however, that his family was friendly to them, and his son one of the prominent members of the sect; and with them, in their bitter hostility to the doctrines of Jesus, Annas heartily joined.

**Ver. 18. The apostles.** Peter and others of them. It does not necessarily mean the whole twelve.

**In the common prison.** This is specially mentioned, that no doubt may rest on the fact of the deliverance by means of an unearthly hand that night. It was no mere temporary confinement in the high priest's house, or in a room of the Temple, but in the state prison of the city.

**Ver. 19. The angel of the Lord.** Commentators even of the schools of Meyer, Neander, and Ewald dislike to acknowledge this angelic interference as a historical fact, and seek by various devices to explain away the statement. So Neander writes: 'The fact of a release by a special Divine guidance to us unknown, became involuntarily changed into the appearance of an angel of the Lord.' Others of the schools of Baur and Zeller reject the whole story as purely unhistorical. An earthquake which opened the doors of the prison, a secret friend of the Nazarenes, perhaps a prison official, have been suggested as the instruments of the apostles' escape; but the narrative admits of no such explanation. It is a simple matter-of-fact statement, and to guard against any such false expositions, the very words spoken by the angel to St. Peter are given us. The frequency of angelic interference in the early days of the Church is remarkable. In this book of the Acts the word '*angel*' occurs twenty times (Wordsworth). Six distinct works of angels are related, chap. v. 19, viii. 26, x. 3, xii. 7, 23, xxvii. 23.

The reluctance to acknowledge angelic interference in the affairs of men here and on other occasions mentioned in the 'Acts,' proceeds from a notion, deep rooted in many minds, that angels do not exist, and that the whole theory of angelic ministries is built up upon comparatively late Jewish tradition, none dating before the captivity in Babylon and the time of Daniel. (Respecting this strange but widespread error, see the Excursus at the end of the section on '*Angels*!')

**Opened the prison doors, and brought them forth.** It has been asked, What was the purpose of this miraculous interference of the angel, since they were brought on the following day before the council and shamefully beaten? But surely the effects of this interposition were immediately felt—(1) by the apostles, to whose faith new strength was added by this visible manifestation of the pro-

tecting hand : fearlessly they appear in the most public spot early in the morning, again proclaiming the holy name of the Master ; (2) by the Sadducee chiefs, whose perplexity and anxiety were increased by this new proof of a strange and awful power connected with these bold men.

Ver. 20. **Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people.** The very words spoken by the angel of deliverance are here quoted. The imprisoned ones were to go at once (the new day was probably already dawning) into the public courts of the temple to proclaim to the people **all the words of this life**, no doubt laying stress upon the words *this life*, which the angel, a being from heaven, himself enjoyed. *The life*, the existence of which the Sadducees, the men who had imprisoned the apostles, denied. *The life*, which was the subject of the teaching and preaching of Peter and his devoted companions (see John vi. 68).

Ver. 21. **They entered into the temple early in the morning, and taught.** During many months of the year in the Holy Land the heat becomes too oppressive for the ordinary labour of the day soon after sunrise. In the early dawn (see John xx. 1) the work of the day would begin, and the worshippers and the many traders and others connected with the busy life of the great Temple of Jerusalem would have arrived, and crowds would be already thronging the courts when Peter and the others who had been brought out of the public prison by the angel arrived at Solomon's Porch.

**But the high priest, and they that were with him.** The ordinary session chamber for the Sanhedrim was on the south side of the temple, at some considerable distance from Solomon's Porch, where the apostles no doubt were speaking to the people. The high priest and his friends in the council assembled in the early morning without being aware of the escape of Peter and the others.

**And called all the council together, and all the senate of the children of Israel.** Meyer, Alford, and Stier understand by the words *ἡ συνέλευσις τοῦ ἱεροῦ*, which are translated *all the senate*, that a special meeting of elders was summoned to assist the Sanhedrim in this difficult matter of suppressing the teaching respecting the resurrection of the crucified Jesus ; but the same word *synedrion*, *senate*, which occurs only here in the New Testament, in the second book of the Maccabees is constantly used for the Sanhedrim. The meaning here seems to be that on this occasion there was a meeting of the whole council, including all the elders who were members of it.

Ver. 23. **The prison truly found we shut with all safety.** We have here the report of the guard who were sent by the high priest to fetch the accused from their place of confinement. They found the prison locked and barred, and the keepers watching as usual, fully believing all was secure ; but on entering, the guard found the prisoners gone.

Ver. 24. **Now when the high priest.** For the word rendered high priest here, in the original Greek we find only *ἱερεύς*, *priest*—that is, *the priest* just mentioned in ver. 21, and who we have explained was Annas.

**The captain of the temple.** As before, the Jewish priest in command of the Levite guard of the Temple. This 'priestly' captain was most

probably himself one of the 'chief priests,' and in consequence had a seat in the Sanhedrim.

**The chief priests.** This order is supposed to have been made up—(1) of those distinguished men who had formerly borne the title and rank of high priest (Caiaphas, for instance), an office which we know at this time was only held during the pleasure of the Roman Government ; (2) of the heads of the twenty-four priestly courses.

**They doubted of them whereunto this would grow.** The strange unexplained escape filled them with terror ; but this new incident would only serve to excite the popular mind, already so much moved in favour of the new sect.

*They are arrested again, and accused before the Sanhedrim.—Peter's Defence.—The Impression it made on the Pharisee Members of the Council.—The Sentence, 26-40.*

Ver. 26. **And brought them without violence : for they feared the people.** At this period the popular favour which the apostles enjoyed had probably reached its culminating point. The many sick who had been lately healed had predisposed a vast number of the inhabitants of Jerusalem and the neighbourhood to listen with interest and kindness to the earnest preaching ; and the words and arguments, we know, had won thousands to the faith, while many others were still wavering before they joined the community. Then the spirit of love which reigned among them, the self-denying eagerness of the richer members, their devotion to the poor and sick, the number of widows and other unemployed women, who before had been leading purposeless lives, for whom the growing Church had found congenial occupation,—all these things weighed with the fickle populace, who so short a time before had clamoured for the crucifixion of the same Master whom now they were ready to worship. The tide, however, soon turned, and a few months later we shall see a bitter persecution raging against the Church, the populace apparently careless of what might happen to those men whose words they had listened to so gladly, and to that society whose works and life had won their admiration and respect.

Ver. 28. **Did not we straitly command you, that ye should not teach in this name ? and behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us.** A concealed dread underlies the whole of the high priest's accusation. He never asks them how they came to be in the Temple teaching that morning, though he knew the evening before they were securely lodged in the state prison. He carefully, too, avoids mentioning the sacred name of Jesus, no doubt uttering with fierce contempt the words, 'this name,' 'your doctrine,' 'this man's blood.' The charge against them really was one of direct disobedience to a decree of the Sanhedrim : this plain command, said the high priest, these men, Peter and his companions, had disobeyed in the hope that they might excite the people to rise against the Sanhedrists, as the murderers of an innocent man ; in fact, had not unexpected friends been found in the midst of the sacred assembly itself, no popular favour without could have saved the apostles then from a most severe sentence of long and rigorous imprisonment, perhaps of death ; for in their public teaching, the high priest and his assessors in the council were charged with the awful accusation of

murdering the Messiah (see ver. 33). Nor was the manifest favour in which they were held by the people generally without, and the powerful intervention of the Pharisee party in the council, sufficient to procure the acquittal of the accused. The council, in spite of these, condemned the teaching and severely punished the leaders before letting them go (see Matt. xxvii. 25).

Ver. 29. **We ought to obey God rather than men.** Peter here commences his defence with the same words which he had made use of before, when the Sanhedrim dismissed the apostles with threats of future punishment. He took up the same solemn argument now a second time; it was as though he said, 'I told you before when you threatened me, we must obey God rather than men,' thinking, no doubt, *now* of his Master's voice from heaven by His angel, the night before, bidding him stand and preach publicly in the Temple.

Not in this, the earliest Church history we possess, do we find any of the leaders of Christianity unfaithful to this principle, twice laid down by their foremost leader; but while they refuse utterly to obey any command which they feel would be contrary to the voice of God, we find them quietly, without murmuring, submitting as now to any penalty the law of the land enforced against them.

This was conspicuously instanced in the life, history, and teaching of Peter and Paul.

Ver. 30. **The God of our fathers.** Identifying himself, in the words 'our fathers,' with the glorious line of patriarchs, prophets, and kings whom the children of Israel in their then state of humiliation and subjection remembered with so passionate a love; while he pointed to Jehovah, the Mighty One of Jacob,—as the God who had raised up Jesus,—raised up not in this place 'from the dead,' as Meyer, following Chrysostom and others, would understand it, but raised up from the seed of David as the *Sent of God*. This interpretation, adopted by Calvin, Bengel, De Wette, etc., admirably agrees with the order in time of the events named by Peter, 'raised up from the seed of David,' 'slain by you,' 'exalted to all power.' Jesus, the beloved name, shunned and dreaded, and then left unnamed by the high priest, but gloried in by the accused apostle, who makes it the central point of his defence.

**Whom ye slew.** The Greek word is chosen with pointed significance: 'And this Glorious One, the Sent of the God of our fathers, ye slew with your own hands.'

**And hanged on a tree.** The cross is here called 'a tree,' a well-known expression to those learned Jewish priests and rabbis who sat in the great council; they would too well remember how, in their sacred law, this death was pronounced accursed (see Deut. xxi. 23).

Ver. 31. **Him hath God exalted with his right hand.** 'To His right hand,' not 'with' (see the note on chap. ii. 23, where a similar change has been adopted). That same Jesus whom *you* slew and hanged on the cross of shame and agony, hath the God of your fathers exalted to His right hand, **to be a Prince**, thus describing His kingly dignity—a Prince to whom all Israel owes obedience; and not only to be the royal chief of all, for he adds, **and a Saviour** too, by whom you must be saved from your sins. The apostle now proceeds to describe the *purpose* of

the exaltation of the crucified, which he says is to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.

With His exaltation, the working of Jesus from His throne in heaven began—the working which, by means of the Holy Spirit, gradually drew men to Him. By the preaching of the gospel He brought men to a change of heart (repentance), and then through faith in Him, which came with their change of heart, He made them sharers in His forgiveness of sins. We must remember that till Jesus was exalted, the Holy Ghost was not sent to men, and till the Holy Ghost was sent, the real work of Christ could not be said to have really begun in the homes of this world. *Israel* is here alone mentioned by Peter, for at this time the idea of a universal salvation was grasped by none of the leading teachers of the doctrine of Jesus: at first none of these men could conceive the God of their fathers offering a broad scheme of salvation, which was to embrace not merely all the coasts of Israel, but the known and unknown isles of the Gentiles. One of the objects of this book of the 'Acts' is to show how the apostles of an exclusive nation developed into the Christian missionaries whose message was to a world.

Ver. 32. **And we are his witnesses of these things.** 'His,' as appointed by Him, as chosen by Him when on earth. 'Of these things,' viz. the death on the accursed tree and the ascension from earth, they were eye-witnesses; but they were witnesses in a yet higher sense of their Master's exaltation, as conscious of the Holy Ghost, which He promised should descend upon them when once He had ascended, and which, in accordance with the promise, fell on them at Pentecost and gave them their new grand powers. **And so is also the Holy Ghost.** The Holy Ghost, too, is joined with them as a witness. His solemn testimony is publicly borne by those miracles performed by the apostles through His power.

Ver. 33. **They were cut to the heart.** Literally, 'they were cut asunder as with a saw' (so the Vulgate, *dissecabantur*).

**Took counsel to slay them.** To carry out such a sentence, the sanction of the Roman Government must have been first obtained, unless they had effected their purpose by having recourse to one of those hurried, arbitrary procedures which some Roman governors, to win popularity, connived at. This was the case in the summary execution of St. Stephen the deacon.

Ver. 34. **A Pharisee named Gamaliel, a doctor of the law, had in reputation among all the people.** This Gamaliel (גמליאל, *benefit of God*).

See Num. i. 10, ii. 10) is generally acknowledged to be identical with the celebrated Gamaliel the elder, who lived at the time, and was the grandson of Hillel, the famous founder of one of the rabbinical schools. His name frequently occurs in the Mishna as an utterer of sayings subsequently quoted as authorities. Although liberal in his views and a student of Greek literature, he was held in high estimation as a most learned and devout Pharisee. 'As among the Schoolmen Aquinas and Bonaventura were called respectively the "Angelic" and "Seraphic" Doctor, so Gamaliel among the Jews has received the name of the "Beauty of the Law," and in the Talmud we read how "since Rabban Gamaliel died, the glory of the law has ceased." He is one of the seven among the great Rabbis to whom the Jews have given the

title of Rabban. Among his pupils, St. Paul and Onkelos (the author of the well-known Targum) are the most famous. The latter, when Gamaliel died, some eighteen years before the fall of Jerusalem, about the time when Paul was shipwrecked at Malta, raised to his master a funeral pile of such rich materials as had never before been known save at the burial of a king' (Howson, *S. Paul*).

Partly from the statement of his interference in behalf of the apostles contained in this chapter, partly from a well-known passage in the *Clementine Recognitions*, where Peter is represented as saying, 'which, when Gamaliel saw, who was a person of influence among the people, but secretly our brother in the faith' (i. 65), he has been supposed to have been, like Nicodemus, Joseph of Arimathea, and other wealthy and distinguished Pharisees, a Christian; but this supposition is totally without authority. Gamaliel lived and died a Pharisee in all the rigid acceptance of the term. A well-known prayer against Christian heretics was composed, or at least approved, by him; in it the following words referring to the followers of Jesus occur: 'Let there be no hope for them who apostatize from the true religion, and let all heretics, how many soever they may be, perish as in a moment.'

The motives which influenced Gamaliel's conduct on this occasion have been much discussed: he prevailed upon the Sanhedrim not to adopt any violent measures towards these leaders of the rising sect, persuading them to let the matter alone; for if it were of mere human origin, it would come to nothing without any interference of theirs; if, on the other hand, it were divine, no human effort would prevail against it. He seems to have acquiesced in the temporary expedient of allowing the accused to be scourged, as the public teaching of the apostles had been carried on in direct defiance of the Sanhedrim (see chap. iv. 17-21), and the honour of the great council seemed to demand some reparation for its outraged authority. Two considerations seem to have influenced him—(1) After all, the main accusation on the part of the high priest and his influential followers was the earnest teaching of those men of a great truth—the resurrection from the dead: in this Gamaliel and the Pharisees sympathized with the apostles against their Sadducee enemies in the council. (2) The rumours of the mighty works which publicly accompanied the teaching, no doubt caused grave misgiving in minds like Gamaliel's, whether some basis of truth did not underlie the whole story.

Ver. 35. **Ye men of Israel, take heed to yourselves what ye intend to do as touching these men.** Gamaliel here, as a wise and far-seeing man, persuades the angry and unreasoning zealots in the council, who would have taken the lives of the teachers of the new sect, to consider well what they were doing; and in confirmation of what he was advancing, appeals, as we shall see in vers. 36, 37, to the experience which past history teaches. He names two well-known political agitators whose enterprises utterly failed, and that without any interference on the part of the Sanhedrim; but while he mentions Theudas and Judas of Galilee, another name, well loved by the accused and persecuted teachers, is in his mind, though not on his lips. He argued, if these things, which then so powerfully exercised their thoughts, were merely derived from a human source, like

the matter of Theudas and Judas of Galilee, they would soon simply fade away into contempt and be forgotten. Let them pause then awhile before they proceeded to any extreme measures.

Ver. 36. **For before these days.** That is, 'not long ago'; so Chrysostom understands the words when he remarks, 'He does not speak of ancient records, though he might have done so, but of more recent histories, which are most powerful to induce belief.' Gamaliel's meaning is: 'This is by no means the first time wild enthusiasts have appeared amongst us; but as you will see from the instances I am going to cite, such men have invariably finished their course in utter defeat and shame.' Still, though he is evidently arguing on the probability of the followers of Jesus turning out similar impostors, in verse 39 he just hints at the possibility of another issue.

**Rose up Theudas, boasting himself to be somebody; to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves: who was slain.** This is one of the so-called historical inaccuracies of the 'Acts.' Josephus mentions (*Antt.* xx. 5, 1) a Theudas who persuaded a great company of people that he was a prophet, to induce them to follow his lead. This impostor was defeated and executed by the troops of Fadus, the Procurator of Judea. Now this happened in the reign of Claudius, some ten or twelve years after this speech of Gamaliel.

The mistake of identifying the Theudas of Josephus with the Theudas instanced by the writer of the 'Acts,' is probably in great measure owing to the mistake of Eusebius, who, forgetful of the dates, and misled by the similarity of the names, confuses the two; but on examination, the details of the two outbreaks are different, for Josephus speaks of a great company of people (*τοῖς ἑκατοσίν τε καὶ ἑξήκοντι*) as following the (later) Theudas of Josephus, while the Theudas of Gamaliel seems to have had comparatively few adherents, about four hundred. The apparent discrepancy between the history of Josephus and the Acts is best explained by the supposition that two persons bearing the name of Theudas appeared as insurgents at different times. Josephus relates how, at the time referred to by Gamaliel (see note on ver. 37), the land was overrun by insurgent bands under the leadership of fanatics. Some of the leaders he mentions by name, others he merely alludes to generally. One of these latter most probably was the Theudas mentioned by Gamaliel, selected by him for special notice, for some reasons unknown to us. The name was by no means an uncommon one, nor is there any improbability in supposing that one Theudas, an insurgent, should have appeared in the time of Augustus, and another fifty years later, when Claudius was reigning. Josephus writes, for instance, of four men named Simon, all leaders of insurrections within forty years, and of three insurgent chiefs named Simon within ten years. It cannot for one moment be conceded that in the speech of Gamaliel, reported by the author of the 'Acts,' a grave historical error exists, considering that the whole writing of the 'Acts' was evidently supervised by St. Paul, the pupil of Gamaliel.

Ver. 37. **After this man arose.** These words determine pretty closely the date of the failure of the pretensions of Theudas. The attempted rising of Judas of Galilee, related in this verse, was a well-known one, and happened in the reign



of Augustus about A.D. 6 or 7—that is, about twenty-six years before the arrest of the apostles. This rising is stated to have taken place *after* that of Theudas; and as both are related as events which happened not long ago (see note on ver. 36), in the memory of some still living, we must fix the date of the attempt of Theudas not very long before that of Judas of Galilee. Now, the period of the death of Herod the Great, which happened a few months after the Bethlehem massacre related in Mark ii., when, as Josephus states, the land was overrun with insurgents led by various fanatics, one of whom we have suggested was Theudas, in all respects fits in with the history.

**Judas of Galilee.** A well-known Jewish enthusiast, styled by Josephus the author of a fourth Jewish sect, though his followers professed the opinions held generally by the Pharisees. The great feature of his teaching was that it was unlawful to pay tribute to Cæsar, as God was the only Ruler of the nation. His followers were dispersed and himself slain, but his opinions were revived by the fierce faction of the Zealots, which arose in the last days of Jerusalem; two of his sons were subsequently crucified, and a third was also put to death by the Roman authorities, as dangerous rebels, before the outbreak of the Jewish war.

**In the days of the taxing.** Better translated *enrolment*. Not that alluded to in Luke ii. 2, and which took place at the birth of Christ, and probably was merely a census of the population. This taxing or enrolment was made after the dethronement of Archelaus, when Judea was converted into a Roman province, and the enrolment of persons and property was made with a view to taxation. It was in consequence of this taxing that Judas of Galilee revolted.

Vers. 38, 39. **And now I say unto you.** Gamaliel's words could be paraphrased thus: 'Is this work a Divine one? does it emanate from God? If not, it will come to nothing, like those examples of imposture of Theudas and Judas of Galilee I have just been quoting to you. There is no reason for our council to interfere as yet with a strong hand, but every reason for us to refrain for the present.' Gamaliel well knew, if the preaching of the Crucified and its strange attendant circumstances were merely a fanatical movement, any very violent measures to suppress it would only assist its progress. His closing words, **Lest haply ye be found even to fight against God**, betray a lurking suspicion in his mind that in the Nazarene story there was something more than met the eye of the ordinary observer; perhaps after all in this later cause there *was* something Divine.

Ver. 40. **And to him they agreed.** How bitterly many of that council must have reproached themselves for the past! The present vote, which dismissed the apostles with a comparatively light penalty, silently condemned the crucifixion of the apostles' Master as a mistake, perhaps as an awful crime.

**And beaten them.** The Sanhedrim thus declining to pronounce any decisive judgment on the real question before them, they inflicted scourging as a penalty for disobedience to their commands. This cruel punishment was inflicted on the naked back of the sufferer. The scourge which was used generally consisted of two lashes knotted with bronze, or heavy indented circles of bronze, or terminated by hooks; it was looked upon by Romans as so shameful a chastisement that it was

forbidden to be inflicted on a Roman citizen. This torture was endured by our blessed Saviour.

Ver. 41. **Rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame.** The glad and joyful willingness to endure martyrdom for the sake of the Master which has been ever so distinguishing a feature in the Christian story, is here shown for the first time. Everything like *fear* was banished from the minds of the followers of Jesus of Nazareth long before this crisis in the Church, but now for the first time appears in Christian history the spirit which welcomes pain and suffering for the sake of Christ. The first consequence of the communion of the Risen Lord with His own, was *fearlessness* on the part of His disciples of all consequences which might ensue from their openly ranging themselves on His side. Fearlessness with them rapidly passed into a glad and joyful readiness to welcome death, if need be, or any agony or shame, for His dear sake. Peter and his brother apostles bore their joyful witness in this cruel suffering of scourging: we shall very soon see a Stephen witnessing his triumphant witness of death; and these famous instances were only the first of that long line of splendid triumphs over pain, and weakness, and mortal suffering, men call martyrdoms—the first joyful pouring out of that blood of the martyrs, men have come to call rightly the seed of the Church.

**For his name.** The better reading here is the nobler expression by far, *for the name*—the well-known name of Him they accepted as Messiah, Redeemer, and God—Jesus. The name was a familiar expression among the disciples, and as such required no addition of 'his,' as in the Received Text, to make it clearer. Hackett well observes, 'that it is a loss to our religious dialect that the term in this primitive sense has fallen into disuse.'

Ver. 42. **And daily in the temple.** Undismayed by any punishment in the past, undeterred by any fear for the future, they did their Master's bidding daily without rest or repose, in public, in the courts of His ancient and beautiful temple.

**And in every house they ceased not to teach.** In private assemblies, too, held in the *now* many homes of the faithful, they taught the doctrines of their Crucified and Risen Lord.

**And preach Jesus Christ,** better translated 'the Christ.' Here, in one word, the special purpose of their public and private teaching is told us. They proclaimed to all in the crowded Temple courts, as in the little earnest home gatherings of the believers, that Jesus the Crucified was no other than the Christ—the Messiah.

#### EXCURSUS A.

#### THE HEBREW DOCTRINE RESPECTING ANGELS BEFORE THE CAPTIVITY.

In the Jerusalem Talmud we read how 'the names of the angels went up by the hand of Israel out of Babylon,' and the date of the prophecy of Daniel, in which book the work and office of the Angelic Host is especially described, at first seems to support the statement. In the book of Daniel, in addition to many general remarks respecting angels, we read of two holy beings who are described for the first time by the names 'Michael,' which signifies 'who is like God,' and 'Gabriel,' 'the man of God.' Based probably upon the remark of the Talmud and the personal mention

of Michael and Gabriel in the book of Daniel, and possibly also upon the mysterious chapter called the 'chariot' in Ezekiel, a notion has become widely diffused that the doctrine taught in the New Testament respecting angels was a new thing, and that no positive teaching respecting these spiritual ones is to be found of an earlier date than the prophecy of Daniel, B.C. 534. But a rapid examination of the Old Testament doctrine will show how direct is the teaching even of the very earliest books on this subject.

At the closed gates of Paradise were placed the cherubim (Gen. iii. 24); an angel or angels are mentioned in connection with the lives of Abraham, Rebecca, and Jacob. In the book of Job they are referred to on several occasions; at the giving of the law on Mount Sinai they were present in myriads. In the First Book of Kings we hear of them again, when Ahab's false prophets obtained, by the help of a lying spirit, power to deceive to his destruction Ahab who wished to be deceived. There is little doubt but that the horses of fire and chariots of fire which carried Elijah up to heaven, and subsequently gathered round Elisha at Dothan, were symbols of angelic presence.

Without touching on the presence, so often mentioned in the earlier books of the Old Testament, of the angel of the Lord, who constantly speaks with authority, as in Gen. xvi. 10-13, and in many other passages as the Lord God Almighty, and who is commonly believed to have been no other than the Second Person of the adorable Trinity, we have, in this short inquiry, shown how the presence of angels among men is distinctly referred to in the Pentateuch, Kings, Psalms, and Job; while Isaiah speaks of the seraphim (the fiery spirits), alludes to their functions about the Most High, and tells us how one of these glorious ones was sent to touch the prophet with a burning coal—symbolic of his heavenly purification.

We gather from these references in the older books of the Old Testament, that there lives in the presence of God a vast assembly, myriads upon myriads of spiritual beings higher than we, but infinitely removed from God, *mighty in strength, doers of His word*, who ceaselessly bless and praise God; wise also, *to whom He gives charge to guard His own in all their ways, ascending and descending to and from heaven and earth*, and who variously minister to men, most often invisibly. Such is the doctrine taught in the older holy books—Genesis to Isaiah. To gather together this teaching, no reference whatever is necessary to the prophecies of Ezekiel, Daniel, or Zechariah, who wrote during or after the captivity. With the exception of the names of Michael and Gabriel, little is told us by Daniel respecting these glorious ones which we did not know before.

The writings of the great Hebrew Rabbi Maimonides, a bitter enemy to Christianity, who taught some 700 years ago, are recognised by the Jews even at the present day, as an admirable exposition of their law and of the main principles of their creed. He writes in his *Yad*, 'that angels exist through the power and the goodness of the Holy One; that there is a variety in their names and degrees.' He enumerates ten degrees or grades of rank among these beings, as mentioned in the Old Testament, and says, 'All these can discern their Creator, and know Him with an

exceeding great knowledge—a knowledge which the power of the sons of men cannot obtain to and reach' (from the *Yad Hachasakah*, cap. xi.).

#### EXCURSUS B.

##### ON THE POSITION OF WOMEN IN THE CHRISTIAN SYSTEM.

Among the causes which have contributed to the rapid spread of Christianity, and even in the most degraded centres to a new and far higher moral tone of thought and life, the influence of women has hardly received its due share of attention.

The religion of Christ, for the first time in the history of the world, gave to woman her proper share of dignity and influence in society; and for eighteen centuries have women, in grateful return, constituted themselves its most faithful supporters, quiet but untiring missionaries of that faith which had at first recognised their work and office in the world. In the group nearest the Messiah during His earthly toils, we find the little band of holy women watching, ministering, listening to the Divine Master; among His few intimates, the *sisters* of Bethany hold a distinguished place. These women stood in the darkness of the cross, they wept over and arranged with tender care the spices and grave-clothes of the tomb, they were among the first who with deep pure joy welcomed the Risen, and were among the earliest enumerations of the members of the new sect. 'The women' are constantly and particularly mentioned throughout the first history of the Church, the 'Acts': they play a distinguished part, never what the severest critic would term an unwomanly one; but we find them always present to help, advise, console, and support: we see them publicly and privately doing in a calm, unostentatious way, the new great work which their Master had found for their hands to do.

In the three great nations of antiquity, very different was the ordinary position of woman. The usual oriental depreciation of the sex appears to have existed from very early times in the Hebrew commonwealth; of this the sacred writings contain abundant proof. Polygamy to a certain extent, apparently authorized, was certainly practised by the greatest and most distinguished of the nation. Compare, for instance, the lives of the three great sovereigns, Saul, David, and Solomon. The estimate of women among the Jews of a much later date, is curiously shown in the apocryphal but still important writing called Ecclesiasticus: 'The badness of men is better than the goodness of women.' In Greece—we speak of the historic age—the foremost and most prominent type of womanhood was that unhappy and degraded being on whom now Christian, which has become public, opinion pronounces a sentence which, if not unmingled with sorrowful pity, is still one of extreme severity. Virtuous women, in the life of those brilliant republics, lived out of public sight, condemned by an iron custom to live in perfect seclusion. Turning to Rome in the days of the republic, while the legal position of the Roman women was extremely low, still the manners of the rising city were so severe that the prominent type of womanhood was of a far purer and loftier character than in Greece; but after the Punic Wars had introduced into Rome the luxury and riches of the East, the moral character of the

people rapidly declined. Dissoluteness reached its climax in the early times of the Empire, almost in the very days which the 'Acts' describes in the first part of the history. Juvenal, in his *Sixth Satire*, and the historians Tacitus and Suetonius, paint the terribly corrupt state of society during the golden days of the Cæsars in colours too vivid for a writer of our age to reproduce; while the existence of such laws as Tacitus (*Ann.* xi. 85) relates as passed by Tiberius, give us some insight into the awful degradation into which the upper classes of the Roman ladies had sunk, public opinion hardly noticing this state of things. Of the condition of women in the great *eastern* monarchies of the old world, it is of course needless to speak. In the book of Daniel we have a picture, accessible to all, of the degradation even of the exalted sharers of the Persian throne; in the changeless East, the present childish seclusion of women, their complete separation from all public society and work, is a fair representation of the existence which they led in all the great oriental kingdoms before the days of Christ.

Our Master claimed for man's hitherto petted toy, but despised companion, an equal place in the republic of redeemed souls, and placed the now ennobled sex under the guardianship of a higher and severer moral code than the world had ever before dreamed of.

Nor, when the day of trial came, were these women followers of the Crucified found unworthy of the new place in the world's great work which

the Founder of the religion and His companions had marked out for them. Amid the records of the early Church, the pure and noble figures of the women martyrs of Christ attract our reverence and respect even in that age of heroic suffering.

But it was in the vast development of charity in its noblest aspects, that greatest of all changes which Christianity has worked in our world, that they have found at last their true sphere. In the older religions of the great political systems which successively flourished before the days of Christ, charity in its broad Christian aspect perhaps existed, but only as an exotic; it never possessed any real place in the hearts and homes of men, till the Master told His own that love to Him meant love to all the suffering and heavy-laden here; then in the organization of that great work of Christian charity, women became at once prominent. In the first struggling days of the new faith, in the front rank, we see Dorcas, and other holy women like her, quietly, faithfully living the new life sketched out for them by that Teacher they all loved so well. As the religion of Christ spread over the empire, and vast institutions of charity were founded in all lands, the work and duties of Christian women multiplied; for in this noble warfare against suffering they were ever the foremost pioneers: in this division of Christian work and progress, those have ever been the truest and most successful workers who, under another system, had been relegated to a childish and worse than useless inactivity. Their work and influence has lasted from the year of the crucifixion to our own days.

## CHAPTER VI.

### *The Election of the so-called Deacons.*

1 **A**ND in those days,<sup>1</sup> "when the number of the disciples was multiplied,<sup>2</sup> there arose a murmuring of the <sup>b</sup> Grecians<sup>3</sup> against <sup>c</sup> the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected <sup>d</sup> in  
2 the daily ministration. Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto *them*, and said, 'It is not reason that we  
3 should leave the word of God,<sup>4</sup> and serve <sup>e</sup> tables. Wherefore, <sup>f</sup> brethren, <sup>g</sup> look ye out among you seven men <sup>h</sup> of honest report, <sup>i</sup> full of the Holy <sup>j</sup> Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint  
4 over this business. But we will <sup>k</sup> give ourselves continually to prayer, and to <sup>l</sup> the ministry of the word. And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, <sup>m</sup> a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost,<sup>6</sup> and <sup>n</sup> Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and <sup>o</sup> Nicolas a <sup>p</sup> prose-  
6 lyte of <sup>q</sup> Antioch: Whom they set before the apostles: and

<sup>a</sup> Ch. ii. 42, 47.  
<sup>b</sup> iv. 4. v. 14.  
<sup>c</sup> So ver. 7.  
<sup>d</sup> Ch. ix. 29.  
<sup>e</sup> xi. 20.  
<sup>f</sup> See 2 Cor. xi. 22.  
<sup>g</sup> Cp. ch. iv. 35.  
<sup>h</sup> Cp. Ex. xviii. 27.  
<sup>i</sup> See Mat. xxi. 12.  
<sup>j</sup> See Deut. i. 13.  
<sup>k</sup> Ch. x. 22.  
<sup>l</sup> xvi. 2. xxii. 12; 1 Tim. v. 10; 3 Jo. 12 in the Gk.  
<sup>m</sup> So 1 Tim. iii. 7; Heb. xi. 27; 3 Jo. 3, 6.  
<sup>n</sup> See ch. ii. 3.  
<sup>o</sup> See ch. ii. 42.  
<sup>p</sup> See ch. i. 17.  
<sup>q</sup> Ch. xi. 24.  
<sup>r</sup> So ver. 8; ch. vii. 55.

<sup>1</sup> Ch. viii. 5, etc., xxi. 8.

<sup>2</sup> Cp. Rev. ii. 6, 15?

<sup>3</sup> See Mat. xxiii. 15.

<sup>4</sup> See ch. xi. 26.

<sup>1</sup> and in these days

<sup>2</sup> murmuring of the Grecian Jews

<sup>3</sup> Some, but not all, of the older authorities omit 'Holy' before 'Ghost' or Spirit.

<sup>4</sup> was multiplying

<sup>5</sup> or forsake the word of God

<sup>6</sup> or Holy Spirit

- 7 when they had <sup>r</sup> prayed, they <sup>r</sup> laid *their* hands on them. And <sup>r</sup> the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and <sup>r</sup> a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith.
- 8 And Stephen, full of faith <sup>r</sup> and power, did great <sup>r</sup> wonders and miracles among the people. Then there arose certain of the synagogue, which is called *the synagogue* of the Libertines,<sup>1</sup> and <sup>r</sup> Cyrenians, and <sup>r</sup> Alexandrians, and of them of <sup>r</sup> Cilicia and of <sup>r</sup> Asia, disputing with Stephen. And they were not able to <sup>r</sup> resist the wisdom and the spirit by which he spake. Then <sup>r</sup> they suborned men, which said, We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses, and *against* God. And they stirred up the people, and the elders, and the scribes, and <sup>r</sup> came upon *him*, and <sup>r</sup> caught him, and brought *him* to <sup>r</sup> the council,
- 13 And set up <sup>r</sup> false witnesses, which said, This man ceaseth not to speak blasphemous <sup>r</sup> words against this <sup>r</sup> holy place, and the law: For we have heard him say, that this Jesus of Nazareth shall <sup>r</sup> destroy this place, and shall change the <sup>r</sup> customs which Moses delivered us. And all that sat in <sup>r</sup> the council, <sup>r</sup> looking stedfastly on him, saw his face as it had been <sup>r</sup> the face of an angel.

<sup>1</sup> Dan. ix. 26. Cp. Mat. xxvi. 61.  
<sup>2</sup> See Lu. iv. 20.

<sup>3</sup> Ch. xvi. 21, xxi. 21, xxvi. 3, xxviii. 17. So ch. xv. 1.  
<sup>4</sup> See Judg. xiii. 6. Cp. Eccles. viii. 1.

<sup>1</sup> The older authorities, instead of 'full of faith,' read 'full of grace.'

<sup>2</sup> But there arose certain of them that were of the synagogue called (the synagogue) of the Libertines

<sup>3</sup> The older authorities generally omit blasphemous.

*The First Dissension in the Church leads to the Appointment of the Seven Deacons, 1-7.*

There is something very sad in the brief statement contained in the opening verses of this sixth chapter. It tells us that the curtain had fallen on the first act of the Church's history. Hitherto, during the Master's life and the first two years which succeeded the crucifixion, the story tells us of noble uninterrupted work, of persecution and death endured by the Teacher and His disciples—tells us of a Church ever gathering in fresh converts, marching onwards through suffering to a sure victory; but in all and through all, it tells us of a firm and unbroken peace within, of a mutual love which, in its pure devoted unselfishness, attempted, in the general community of goods of the Jerusalem Church, a way of life afterwards found to be impracticable. But now we see the fair life rudely broken in upon, and the apostles, roused from their dream of love and peace, compelled to make arrangements for governing the community which, in obedience to their Lord's commands, they had called into existence, after the pattern of the ways of the world. It is a humiliating thought that the first great movement to organize ecclesiastical order and discipline in the Church of Christ was forced upon the apostles by this outbreak of human evil passions among the

believers; the 'murmurings' which startled the apostles from their early dreams of a Church whose members should possess all things in common, and who should be of one heart and one mind—these 'murmurings' of a few poor Jewish women, whose only offence in the eyes of the apostles' assistants in the public distribution, was, that they spoke the Greek tongue, and were ignorant of the sacred Hebrew dialects, were but the beginning of the first storm of jealousy and fury which rent the Church of Christ—a storm which, as the history of the 'Acts' advances, we find ever gathering fresh intensity, and perplexing with new issues the minds of the early leaders of Christian thought (see especially Acts xiii. 50, xiv. 19, xviii. 12, xxiii. 12; Gal. ii.; and in post-apostolic literature the Clementine writings, *The Homilies and Recognitions*).

These records show us only too plainly how in very early times Christians were divided into at least two bitterly hostile camps.

Ver. 1. In those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied. The literal rendering *was multiplying* is more forcible; while the apostles after their liberation went on with their high mission, every day the number of believers continued to increase in spite of the second arrest of the apostles and the scourging.

There arose a murmuring. This dissatisfaction

was the first and immediate consequence of the attempts of the Church of Jerusalem to bring about a general community of goods.

**Of the Grecians.** The words *τῶν Ἑλληνιστῶν* are better rendered of the *Grecian Jews*. These were persons converted to the religion of Jesus from Judaism, but who, owing to their origin or habitation, spoke Greek as their ordinary language, and used the Greek version of the LXX. There were at that time a vast number of Jews who, residing chiefly in foreign parts, had lost the use of their native Hebrew, and generally spoke the Greek language. Many of these, belonging to Jewish families settled in Egypt and other countries, had come to reside in Jerusalem, then as ever the capital city of their people.

**Against the Hebrews.** The 'Hebrews' were the pure Jews who, not residing necessarily in Palestine, still used the Hebrew Scriptures and spoke the dialect of the sacred tongue then current—the Aramaic. The distinction between the Grecians and the Hebrews was not one of nationality, but of language.

**Because their widows were neglected.** Some commentators have supposed that these widows are mentioned as representatives of all the poor and needy who claimed their daily subsistence from the Church; but this is improbable. It is easy to conceive of these poor lonely women, who belonged to what was considered an inferior caste, being neglected in such a distribution.

**In the daily ministration.** This refers to a daily distribution either of food or money among the poorer and more helpless members of the Church. The funds which defrayed the cost of such a distribution were supplied by the free donations of the richer brethren (see chap. ii. 45-iv. 34). The almoners were, in the first instance, no doubt the apostles themselves; but when the number of the believers had increased, this duty of course was deputed to assistants.

There is no doubt that the real cause of these 'murmurings' which disturbed the peace of the early Church, must be sought for in the jealousy which always existed between the Jews who, with the ancient language, had preserved more rigidly the old customs and tone of Hebrew thought, and the Grecian or foreign Jews who, with the Greek language, had adopted broader and less rigid views generally; the former dwelt for the most part, though not exclusively, in Palestine. We find, for instance, the family of St. Paul, which belonged to this exclusive 'Hebrew' caste, settled in Tarsus, a city of Cilicia.

The adoption of Christianity does not seem to have welded together these two great divisions of the people. As years went on, the schism even appears to have widened. The pure Hebrew Jews seem to have resented the broad inclusive spirit which soon welcomed the Gentile of every land and race into the fold of the Church, and, standing partly aloof, to have gradually formed themselves into that company of schismatics known later as Judaizing Christians, who so bitterly opposed St. Paul, and then the men of St. Paul's school of thought. Of this first great schism in the Church, which appears in this sixth chapter of the Acts, we find traces existing as late as the third century.

**Ver. 2. Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples.** In the first instance, the apostles appear themselves to have attended to the dis-

tribution of the alms which were brought to them, and laid at their feet; but as the Church rapidly increased, duties more important occupied them, and they were only able to exercise a general oversight. This business of feeding the poor was probably delegated to others in an informal manner, and the feelings set out at some length above, seem to have had their influence in the division of alms and food among the widows and helpless poor of the more despised class; hence the murmuring. The apostles seem at once to have acknowledged the justice of the remonstrance; they agree amongst themselves that an immediate change in their way of administration is necessary, and determine at once upon a formal division of labour. Without making any pretensions to authority, or suggesting the names of men to be chosen as their assistant ministers, they summon a meeting of the whole Church, and after explaining the case leave the decision with the assembled brethren.

A difficulty has been suggested respecting the great number of the multitude of the disciples meeting together; but (1) we are not told *where* they met: surely the city contained halls and courts large enough for a great assembly if need be. (2) Many of the believers had no doubt left Jerusalem. (3) At such a meeting, only those really interested in the internal government of the society would be present.

**Ver. 3. Look ye out among you seven men.** The special number 'seven' has been made the object of much curious inquiry; some have suggested that there were now seven thousand believers in Jerusalem, and that one almoner was appointed for each thousand; others, that the Church in the city was divided into seven separate congregations. The seven Archangels, the sevenfold gifts of the Spirit, the sacredness of the number seven, have each in their turn been suggested as giving the clue to the selection of this particular number; but no real ground for this choice of the number seven has ever been found: the reasons which determined the apostles here, are utterly unknown to us.

A far more interesting question, however, is suggested by this episode in the 'Acts.' Have we here really the account of the institution of that third order in the Church called 'deacons'?

It is remarkable that the word *διάκονος*, *deacon*, literally a ministering servant, never once occurs in the 'Acts' as the title of these seven; the term is used four times in the New Testament as an official designation,—once in the Epistle to the Philippians, and three times in the First Epistle to Timothy. Philip, for instance, one of the seven who is mentioned subsequently in the 'Acts,' is called, not a deacon, but an evangelist. In the whole book of the 'Acts' no direct mention is ever made of the office of deacon. The silence of this book on the point in question causes us at first to hesitate before we identify the solemn ordination of the seven with the foundation of the third great order of the Christian Church. On the other hand, the early Christian writers Ignatius, Irenæus, and Origen, consider that we have here the history of the institution of the diaconate. From Eusebius we learn that in his day the Church of Rome, whilst it had forty-six presbyters, had only seven deacons. Of course, this was in strict imitation of the first solemn ordination recounted in this sixth chapter of our book. Chrysostom takes a different view of their office, and speaks of their

ordination as intended for a special purpose. But the general view of the Church from the earliest times has been, that in the setting apart of the seven, we have the primitive institution of the diaconate. These men were the formally-recognised assistants of the apostles; they were solemnly dedicated to their work, which, besides the superintendence of the Church's alms, included, as we shall see in the case of the two who subsequently appear in the history, the ministry of the word. Both Stephen and Philip, we know, were powerful and effective preachers; the first (Stephen), as an orator, was probably the most learned and eloquent in the apostolic age. To assert that these seven in any way occupied the position which ecclesiastical order, even so early as in the lifetime of St. Paul, has assigned to deacons, would be utterly to misstate the whole spirit of the story of the early Church. The seven occupied a place of far higher importance than that held by the deacons of after years,—a position, in fact, as Chrysostom says, peculiar to themselves. Still, in this solemn setting apart by the apostles of an inferior order for the purpose of performing certain duties which interfered with the life and work of the elder officers of the Church, we must recognise the first planting of that lower order which, as the Church grew, gradually developed, and adapting itself to new and altered conditions before thirty years had elapsed, was formally termed the diaconate.

**Of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom.** The requirements to be possessed by the seven show what an important office the apostles deemed this subordinate ministry; they must not only be men of high honour, of acknowledged integrity of character, but they must be full of the Spirit, that is, distinguished for their enthusiasm in the cause, burning with holy zeal, and to their zeal they must add wisdom. Out of the number of believers in Jesus, who were now counted by thousands, it were no hard task to pick out men whose learning and knowledge equalled their zeal and fervour. It is a noticeable fact how in these early days those unlettered men whom the Lord in His wisdom had chosen, were guided, when His Church had become a power, in their first solemn choice of assistants, to look for men not only of stainless character and of burning zeal, but for those who, besides being good and earnest, possessed a reputation for knowledge and wisdom.

**Ver. 5. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith.** 'See,' says Chrysostom, writing of St. Stephen, 'a certain one even among the seven was foremost, and gained the chief prize; for although all shared in the ordination alike, yet this one drew upon himself greater grace (than the others).' St. Stephen, who has won for himself in the annals of the Church of Christ the proud title of the first martyr, was chosen first by the assembly. He is especially mentioned as 'full of faith.' The faith alluded to is that intense loving trust in Jesus as the Redeemer which is the root of all Christian virtues; for this faith, in addition to his other high qualities, Stephen, even in that age of exalted devotion, was conspicuous.

**And Philip.** Well known afterwards as the 'apostle' of Samaria (see Acts viii.). It was this Philip who converted the minister of the Ethiopian Queen Candace; he is mentioned again in the twenty-first chapter of the book as dwelling at

Cæsarea with his four prophet-daughters; he seems to have been generally known as the 'evangelist.' **Prochorus, etc.** This and the next three names never occur again in the New Testament. Nothing is known respecting the history of these four persons.

**Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch.** This last-named of the seven must have been originally a Gentile, who had accepted Judaism and submitted to the rite of circumcision. From the special mention of his being a proselyte, it would seem that the other six were Jews by birth. The names of all the seven are Greek; but we cannot positively conclude from this circumstance that they were all Hellenists or Greek Jews, for it was not unusual for a pure Hebrew to possess a Greek name, as in the case of the apostles Andrew and Philip for instance. Upon the memory of Nicolas rests an unfortunate tradition related by Irenæus, Epiphanius, and others, which asserts that this Nicolas was the founder of the sect of Nicolaitanes mentioned with such stern severity in Revelation ii. 6, 15. Perhaps the true version of this story is the relation of Clement of Alexandria, who says that Nicolas himself was famous for the purity of his conduct, but that he was the innocent cause of the heresy which bears his name, which arose from a perversion of some words he once uttered (see Eusebius, *H. E.* iii. 29).

**Ver. 6. When they had prayed, they laid their hands on them.** The hand of 'him who ordains is laid on the head of him who is to be ordained, but the effect of the act is from God' (Chrysostom). The earliest mention of 'laying on of hands' occurs in Gen. xlviii. 10. It is there connected with blessing only. It was enjoined on Moses as the form of conferring the highest office among the chosen people upon Joshua, and from that time was used on such occasions by the Jews. We find it used in the early Church. By the laying on of hands, the special gifts of the Holy Ghost were imparted (Acts viii. 17), the ministerial office was conferred (1 Tim. v. 22. See also Heb. vi. 2, which speaks of the ceremony as one of the Christian institutions). Hackett's comment on this passage, which speaks of the 'laying on of hands,' is noteworthy: 'It was of the nature of a prayer that God would bestow the necessary gifts, rather than a pledge that they were actually conferred.'

**Ver. 7. And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly.** The dissensions caused by the growing jealousy between the Foreign and the Hebrew-speaking Jews were at all events for the time composed, and the Church within and without continued to prosper, and its numbers rapidly to increase. The measures taken by the apostles to restore harmony seem to have been effectual, and the introduction of the new officers into the governing body was a fresh element in the society. Authoritative teachers, trained in schools of Greek as well as of Hebrew Thought, now preached and taught side by side with the Twelve, and with their full approval, and thus prepared the way for a far broader preaching of the doctrines of Jesus than had ever yet been dreamed of. As the first-fruits of their wider and more comprehensive teaching, the historian of the 'Acts' tells us how a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith. Ezra relates (ii. 36-39) that 4289 priests returned from Babylon. These numbers by this time no doubt had greatly increased. 'At this

time was probably the culminating point of popularity of the Church at Jerusalem. As yet all seemed going on prosperously for the conversion of Israel. The multitude honoured the apostles. The advice of Gamaliel had moderated the opposition of the Sanhedrim; the priests were gradually being won over. But God's designs were far different. At this period another great element in the testimony of the Church is brought out in the person of Stephen, its protest against Pharisaism. This arrays against it that powerful and zealous sect, and henceforward it finds neither favour nor tolerance with either of the parties among the Jews, but increasing and bitter enmity from them both' (Alford).

*The Acts of St. Stephen, vi. 8-viii. 2.*

Ver. 8. **And Stephen.** One of the new men just chosen as assistants to the Twelve at once attracted public attention. His fearlessness, his splendid oratory, his intense faith, the great wonders and signs done in the power of this faith, threw into the shade the apostles and their words and works. Stephen soon became in the eyes of the Jews the foremost among the Nazarene heretics by his fearless denunciation of the emptiness of Judaism as practised by Pharisee as well as Sadducee. He drew down on his head the bitter hatred of each of the powerful parties in the state.

**Full of faith.** The better reading here is *χάριτος, grace*, not to be understood as 'favour with the people,' but as 'favour with God,' the effects of which grace were those Divine powers which enabled him to work those signs and wonders.

**And power.** That is, strength, heroic fortitude to do and to endure; *heroismus* (Meyer).

**Did great wonders and miracles among the people.** It is better to refer the special power by which Stephen worked these great wonders, to the intenseness of his faith, rather than to the special grace which, in common with the other six, he received by the imposition of the apostles' hands. This is the first instance given us of any one not an apostle working signs and wonders.

Ver. 9. **Then there arose.** The more accurate translation is, 'But there arose.' The connection of thought is, the teaching and work of Stephen struck a new chord in the heart of the people. Many who had been deaf before, like the priests, were now constrained to listen. A new tide of success apparently had commenced to flow, 'but there arose' new enemies; the success stirred up a new hindrance.

**Certain of the synagogue.** An exact classification of these synagogues, which are mentioned here as the scenes of Stephen's disputation, is perhaps impossible; the Greek here is perplexed, and the precise definition of each of these Jewish congregations somewhat doubtful. In the great Jewish city, the common metropolis of the race, all shades of opinion, Greek and Aramaic (Hebrew), of course found a home. The Rabbinic writers tell us that there were in Jerusalem 480 synagogues. This is no doubt an exaggeration, and the number probably a mystic one; still, it is certain that most of the great foreign colonies of Jews, whose members for religious purposes or for business were constantly passing and repassing between their distant homes and the holy city, were represented by a synagogue settled in Jerusalem. Five of these nations are here mentioned as possessing congrega-

tions in the capital. They seem to represent generally the three great divisions of Jews settled abroad,—Roman, Grecian, Asiatic. The Libertine and Cyrenian synagogues represent Rome; the Alexandrian, Greece; the Cilician and Asian, the East. With the teachers of these different schools of Jewish thought, Stephen came in contact.

Which is called the **synagogue of the Libertines.** This is not, as some have supposed, a geographical designation, but it stands for a great class of Roman Jews whose fathers were originally sold as captives in Rome after the Expedition of Pompey about B.C. 53. These were for the most part freed, and, by a decree of Tiberius some twelve or thirteen years previous to the present time, had been banished from Rome, and great numbers had taken up their abode in Jerusalem.

**And Cyrenians.** Cyrene was a great city of the province of Cyrenaica, in North Africa. Josephus relates how one-fourth of its inhabitants were Jews. They had originally been settled there by Ptolemy Lagus. Simon the Cyrenian is mentioned as carrying the cross of Jesus. Cyrenian Jews were present at the feast of Pentecost of Acts ii. (see also Acts xi. 20 and xiii. 1).

**And Alexandrians.** Alexandria was considered at this time to be the second city of the empire. It was the seat of Hellenistic learning and culture. A special quarter of the city was assigned to the Jews, who were estimated as numbering 100,000. Alexander the Great settled them there as colonists, and gave them extraordinary privileges. They had a governor of their own named the Alabarch, and were ruled by their own laws. The famous writer Philo was at this period living in Alexandria.

**And of them of Cilicia.** This province, geographically speaking, occupied the south-eastern division of what is now known as Asia Minor. Many Jews were settled here. A colony of Jews was settled here by Antiochus the Great. It was at this time a Roman province. St. Paul was a native of Cilicia, and there is no doubt but that among the Rabbis and teachers of the Cilician synagogue, who met and argued with Stephen, not the least distinguished was the brilliant pupil of Gamaliel, the young man Saul.

**And of Asia.** Not Asia Minor in the modern geographical division, but a province including Mysia, Lydia, and Caria, with Ephesus as the principal city.

Ver. 10. **And they were not able to resist the wisdom.** In the disputation the doctors of those great synagogues just mentioned, were fairly beaten in argument by the divinely-inspired wisdom of Stephen, who met them on their own ground, showing how marvellously the allusions and promises contained in the law and in the prophets were fulfilled in the person of Jesus.

What now was there in Stephen's preaching which so powerfully affected the rulers in Israel, which even alienated the people hitherto so favourably inclined to the new sect? Was his teaching different to that of Peter or John? There is no doubt that Stephen, with the light of the Holy Ghost shining clear and full on his early and elaborate training, saw more plainly than the older and comparatively untaught apostles how transitory after all was that law of Moses now more than ever fanatically revered and observed; how faded were the glories of that Temple, the object

now, more than at any previous time, of a passionate love. The sacred law, the holy and beautiful house, in the days when our Lord and His apostles lived on earth, were all that remained to the Jew of his ancestral glories; their holy land was ruled by strangers, their name and fame were only a memory; so they surrounded the law of Moses and the house on Mount Sion with a strange unreasoning devotion; and when Stephen told them that these things were only shadows which were even then passing away, it was an easy matter, by a very slight perversion of his words, for the Jewish leaders, Pharisee and Sadducee, to excite among the people a storm of patriotic indignation against one who dared to teach such hateful doctrines.

**Ver. 11. Then they suborned men, which said.** That is, they secretly instructed, having concerted together what should be said.

**Blasphemous words.** According to the law of Moses, blasphemy consisted in contempt of Moses and his institutions, and was a capital offence (see Deut. xiii. 6, 10). This charge brought against Stephen was the same which was made against Christ, and for which, as far as the Jews were concerned, He was condemned.

**Ver. 12. And they stirred up the people.** It was above all things necessary for the enemies of these Nazarenes to have public opinion on their side. We have seen how popular favour on a former occasion (chap. v. 26) had protected the apostles. The people were now won over to the side of the persecutors of the followers of Jesus by an appeal to their patriotism (see note above on ver. 10).

**And the elders, and the scribes.** The foremost men in Israel who had seats in the great council. These are mentioned without reference to the peculiar school of thought, Pharisee or Sadducee, to which they might belong. The teaching of Stephen arrayed both these two great parties against him and his cause.

**Ver. 13. And set up false witnesses.** These words have created some difficulty. In what sense were these witnesses 'false'? At first sight Stephen seems to have used in his arguments words not very dissimilar from those which he was charged with uttering. But these witnesses, even perhaps quoting before the Sanhedrim the very words used by the eloquent Nazarene teacher, took them out of their original context, distorted them, and evidently represented him as unceasingly (*ἀνεπαύτως*) assailing the Temple and the holy Jewish rites, held him up, first before the people, and then in more guarded language before the great council, as a fanatical enemy of all that the devout Israelite looked upon as holy and divine.

The procedure of these jealous and angry Jews who suborned the false witnesses is curious, and deserves special notice. *Firstly.* When they wanted to excite the populace against Stephen, they did not scruple to charge him (ver. 11) with

the most awful blasphemy against Moses and even against the God of Israel. *Secondly.* When they had so far gained their point, and they had the people with them, and the accused was about to be brought before the state Jewish tribunal, the witnesses they instructed had considerably modified the grave and terrible accusation they had spread abroad among the people. The word blasphemous (ver. 13) disappears (according to the reading of the better MSS.). Nothing is said about Stephen railing against the revered lawgiver or the Awful Name. His offence was, he had spoken against the Temple and the law. *Thirdly.* When face to face with the accused, these charges are again watered down to a simple statement, how they remembered Stephen quoting certain well-known words of the Crucified, which they construed as a threat against the Temple and the law; but even this was enough in the eyes of the hostile Sanhedrim to warrant a solemn trial for life or death.

**Ver. 15. Saw his face as it had been the face of an angel.** And the whole of that great council turned their earnest and excited gaze from the accusers to the accused, to see how the follower of the Crucified would look, charged with so grave a charge, now brought face to face with the rulers of his people; and to their surprise and awe, no troubled anxious gaze met theirs; for over the features of the servant of Jesus had passed a radiance not belonging to this world, a light at once beautiful and terrible, which these men could only compare to the light which their Divine story told them used to play round the forehead of Moses when he came from the presence of the Eternal. Many have attempted to show that nothing more is intended by the words 'his face as it had been the face of an angel,' than a description of the calm and holy aspect of the first martyr as he stood before his judges. But the expression in the 'Acts' points to something more than this, for, as Hackett observes, 'the comparison is an unusual one, and the Jews supposed the visible appearance of angels to correspond with their superhuman rank (see Acts i. 10; Matt. xxviii. 3; Luke xxiv. 4; Rev. xviii. 1). The countenance of Stephen, like that of Moses on his descent from the Mount, shone probably with a preternatural lustre proclaiming him a true witness, a servant of Him whose glory was so fitly symbolized by such a token. The occasion was worthy of the miracle.'

St. Augustine beautifully writes of the martyr's transfigured face: 'O lamb, foremost (of the flock of Christ), fighting in the midst of wolves, following after the Lord, but still at a distance from Him, and already the angel's friend. Yes, how clearly was he the angel's friend who, while in the very midst of the wolves, still seemed like an angel; for so transfigured was he by the rays of the Sun of Righteousness, that even to his enemies he seemed a being not of this world.'



## CHAPTER VII.

*The Defence of Stephen before the Sanhedrim—His Martyrdom.*

- 1,2 **T**HEN said the high priest, Are these things so? And he said,
- “Men,<sup>1</sup> brethren, and fathers, hearken; <sup>b</sup> The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in <sup>c</sup> Mesopotamia, <sup>d</sup> before he dwelt in Charran,<sup>2</sup> And said unto him, <sup>e</sup> Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come <sup>f</sup> into the land which I shall show thee. Then <sup>g</sup> came he out of the land of the Chaldeans, and dwelt in Charran:<sup>3</sup> and from thence, <sup>h</sup> when his father was dead, <sup>i</sup> he <sup>j</sup> removed him into this land, wherein ye now dwell. And he gave him none inheritance in it, <sup>k</sup> no, not so much as to set his foot on: yet he promised that <sup>l</sup> he would give it to him for a possession,<sup>4</sup> and to his seed after him, <sup>m</sup> when *as yet* he had no child. And God spake on this wise, That <sup>n</sup> his seed should sojourn in a strange land; and that they should bring them into bondage, and <sup>o</sup> entreat *them* evil <sup>p</sup> four hundred years. And the nation to whom they shall be in bondage will I judge, said God: and after that shall they come forth, and <sup>q</sup> serve me in this place. And <sup>r</sup> he gave him the covenant of circumcision: and <sup>s</sup> so Abraham begat Isaac, and circumcised him the eighth day; and <sup>t</sup> Isaac begat Jacob; and <sup>u</sup> Jacob begat the twelve <sup>v</sup> patriarchs. And <sup>w</sup> the patriarchs, <sup>x</sup> moved with envy, <sup>y</sup> sold Joseph into Egypt:<sup>5</sup> but <sup>z</sup> God was with him, And delivered him out of all his afflictions, and <sup>aa</sup> gave him favour and wisdom in the sight of Pharaoh king of Egypt; and he made him governor over Egypt and all his house. <sup>ab</sup> Now there came a dearth over all the land of Egypt and Canaan, and great affliction: and our fathers found no sustenance. <sup>ac</sup> But when Jacob heard that there was corn in Egypt, he sent out our fathers first. And <sup>ad</sup> at the second time Joseph <sup>ae</sup> was made known to his brethren; and <sup>af</sup> Joseph’s kindred was made known <sup>ag</sup> unto Pharaoh. <sup>ah</sup> Then sent Joseph, and called his father Jacob to *him*, and <sup>ai</sup> all his kindred, <sup>aj</sup> threescore and fifteen <sup>ak</sup> souls. So Jacob <sup>al</sup> went down into Egypt, and <sup>am</sup> died, he, and <sup>an</sup> our fathers, And <sup>ao</sup> were carried over <sup>ap</sup> into <sup>aq</sup> Sychem,<sup>6</sup> and laid in the sepulchre that <sup>ar</sup> Abraham bought for a sum of money <sup>as</sup> of the sons of Emmor <sup>at</sup> the *father* of Sychem. But when <sup>au</sup> the time of the promise drew nigh,
- <sup>o</sup> Cp. Gen. xxiii. 16 with Gen. xxxiii. 19; Josh. xxiv. 32.  
<sup>q</sup> Gen. xv. 13, 16; ver. 6. <sup>p</sup> Expressed Gen. xxxiii. 10; Josh. xxiv. 32.

<sup>1</sup> omit ‘Men.’<sup>2</sup> Haran<sup>3</sup> in possession<sup>4</sup> moved with envy against Joseph, sold him into Egypt<sup>5</sup> became known<sup>6</sup> and they were carried over<sup>7</sup> better rendered ‘to Sychem’ (*viz. the place so named*).

which God had sworn<sup>8</sup> to Abraham, <sup>7</sup> the people grew and  
 18 multiplied in Egypt, Till another king arose,<sup>9</sup> <sup>8</sup> which knew not  
 19 Joseph. The same <sup>7</sup> dealt subtilly with our kindred, and evil  
 entreated our fathers, <sup>8</sup> so that *they* cast out their young  
 20 children,<sup>10</sup> to the end *they* might not <sup>9</sup> live. In which time  
<sup>10</sup> Moses was born, and was exceeding <sup>10</sup> fair, and nourished<sup>11</sup>  
 21 up in his father's house three months: And <sup>11</sup> when he was cast  
 out, Pharaoh's daughter took him up, and nourished him for  
 22 her own son. And <sup>12</sup> Moses was learned<sup>12</sup> in all <sup>12</sup> the wisdom  
 of the Egyptians, and was <sup>13</sup> mighty in words<sup>13</sup> and in deeds.  
 23 And when he was full forty years old,<sup>14</sup> <sup>14</sup> it came into his heart  
 24 <sup>15</sup> to visit his brethren the children of Israel. And seeing one  
 of *them* suffer wrong, he defended *him*, and avenged him that  
 25 was oppressed, and smote the Egyptian: For he supposed<sup>16</sup> his  
 brethren would have understood how that God by his hand  
 26 would deliver them: but they understood not. <sup>17</sup> And the next  
 day he showed himself unto them as they strove, and would  
 have set them at one *again*, saying, Sirs, ye are brethren; why  
 27 do ye wrong one to another? But he that did his neighbour  
 wrong thrust him away, saying, <sup>18</sup> Who made thee a ruler and a  
 28 judge over us? Wilt thou kill me, as thou didst<sup>16</sup> the Egyptian  
 29 yesterday? <sup>19</sup> Then fled Moses at this saying, and was a  
 stranger<sup>17</sup> in the land of Madian,<sup>18</sup> <sup>18</sup> where he begat two sons.  
 30 And when forty years were expired,<sup>19</sup> <sup>19</sup> there appeared to him,  
 in the wilderness <sup>19</sup> of mount Sina, an angel of the Lord<sup>20</sup> in a  
 31 flame of fire in a bush. When Moses saw *it*,<sup>21</sup> he wondered at  
 the sight: and as he drew near to <sup>20</sup> behold *it*,<sup>21</sup> the voice of the  
 32 Lord came unto him,<sup>22</sup> *Saying*, <sup>22</sup> I *am* the God of thy fathers,  
 the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of  
 33 Jacob. Then <sup>23</sup> Moses trembled, and durst not <sup>21</sup> behold. Then  
 said the Lord to him, <sup>24</sup> Put off *thy* shoes<sup>22</sup> from thy feet: for  
 34 the place where<sup>24</sup> thou standest is holy ground. <sup>25</sup> I have seen,  
 I have seen the affliction<sup>25</sup> of my people which is in Egypt, and  
 I have heard their groaning, and am come down to deliver  
 35 them. And now come, I will send thee into Egypt. This

<sup>8</sup> The older authorities, instead of 'God had sworn,' read 'God had promised' or 'vouchsafed.'

<sup>9</sup> Some of the older authorities insert after 'arose,' 'in Egypt' or 'over Egypt.'

<sup>10</sup> in causing the young children to be cast out

<sup>11</sup> and he was nourished

<sup>12</sup> According to the older authorities, 'in his words,' etc.

<sup>13</sup> And when he was just forty years old

<sup>14</sup> Wouldst thou kill me as thou killedst

<sup>15</sup> Midian

<sup>16</sup> The older authorities omit after 'an angel' the words 'of the Lord.'

<sup>17</sup> omit 'it.'

<sup>18</sup> Loose the shoes, etc.

<sup>19</sup> better, 'I have surely seen the affliction,' etc.

<sup>19</sup> And Moses was instructed

<sup>18</sup> and he supposed

<sup>17</sup> and became a sojourner

<sup>19</sup> And when forty years were fulfilled

<sup>20</sup> The older authorities omit after 'an angel' the words 'of the Lord.'

<sup>21</sup> omit 'it.'

<sup>22</sup> The older authorities omit the words 'unto him.'

<sup>23</sup> for the place whereon

<sup>7</sup> Ex. i. 7; Ps. cv. 24. So ch. xiii. 17. <sup>8</sup> Cited from Ex. i. 8. <sup>9</sup> Ex. i. 10 (Heb. and Gk.) So Ps. cv. 25. <sup>10</sup> Ex. i. 22. <sup>11</sup> Ex. i. 17, 18, 22 (Gk.); Lu. xvii. 33 (Gk.). <sup>12</sup> Ex. ii. 2. <sup>13</sup> Heb. xi. 23 in the Gk. <sup>14</sup> Ex. ii. 3. 10. <sup>15</sup> Cp. Dan. i. 4, 17. <sup>16</sup> Kings iv. 30. <sup>17</sup> So Lu. xxiv. 19. <sup>18</sup> Cor. ii. 9 (Gk.). Cp. Lu. xxiv. 38. <sup>19</sup> Ex. ii. 11, 12.

<sup>17</sup> Ex. ii. 13, 14

<sup>18</sup> Cp. Lu. xii. 14.

<sup>19</sup> Ex. ii. 15.

<sup>20</sup> Ex. ii. 22, iv. 20, xviii. 3, 4. <sup>21</sup> Ex. iii. 2.

<sup>22</sup> Cp. Ex. iii. 1.

<sup>23</sup> Ver. 32; Lu. xii. 24, 27; Heb. iii. 1 in the Gk.

<sup>24</sup> Cited from Ex. iii. 6. <sup>25</sup> So Ex. iii. 6.

<sup>26</sup> Ex. iii. 5. So Josh. v. 15.

<sup>27</sup> Ex. iii. 7 (Heb. and Gk.), 8, 10.

- Moses whom they refused, saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge? the same did God send *to be* a ruler and a deliverer <sup>q</sup> by the hand of the angel <sup>26</sup> which appeared to him in the bush. <sup>36</sup> He brought them out, <sup>37</sup> after that he had showed wonders and signs in the land of Egypt, and <sup>4</sup> in the Red sea, <sup>37</sup> and <sup>2</sup> in the wilderness <sup>2</sup> forty years. This is *that* Moses, which said unto the children of Israel, <sup>2</sup> A prophet shall the Lord your <sup>26</sup> God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; <sup>38</sup> him shall ye hear. <sup>39</sup> This is he <sup>2</sup> that was in the <sup>2</sup> church in the wilderness, <sup>30</sup> with <sup>2</sup> the angel which spake to him in the mount Sina, and *with* our fathers: <sup>2</sup> who received *the* lively <sup>39</sup> oracles <sup>31</sup> to give unto us: To whom our fathers would not obey, <sup>33</sup> but thrust *him* from *them*, and in their hearts <sup>2</sup> turned <sup>40</sup> back again <sup>33</sup> into Egypt, Saying unto Aaron, <sup>2</sup> Make us gods to go before us: <sup>34</sup> for *as for* this Moses, which brought us out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him. <sup>41</sup> And <sup>2</sup> they made a calf in those days, and <sup>2</sup> offered sacrifice unto the idol, and <sup>2</sup> rejoiced in <sup>2</sup> the works of their own hands. <sup>42</sup> Then God <sup>2</sup> turned, and <sup>2</sup> gave them up to worship <sup>2</sup> the host of heaven; as it is written <sup>2</sup> in the book of the prophets, <sup>2</sup> O ye house of Israel, have ye offered to me <sup>26</sup> slain beasts and <sup>43</sup> sacrifices *by the space of* forty years <sup>26</sup> in the wilderness? Yea, ye took up the tabernacle of <sup>2</sup> Moloch, and the star of your god Remphan, <sup>37</sup> figures <sup>26</sup> which ye made to worship them: <sup>44</sup> and I will <sup>2</sup> carry you away beyond Babylon. Our fathers had <sup>2</sup> the tabernacle of Witness <sup>39</sup> in the wilderness, as he had appointed, speaking unto Moses, <sup>2</sup> that *he* should make it <sup>45</sup> according to the fashion that he had seen. Which also our fathers that came after <sup>40</sup> brought in with Jesus <sup>41</sup> into <sup>2</sup> the possession of the Gentiles, <sup>43</sup> whom God drave out before <sup>46</sup> the face of our fathers, <sup>2</sup> unto the days of David; Who <sup>2</sup> found favour before God, and <sup>2</sup> desired <sup>2</sup> to find a tabernacle <sup>47</sup> for the God of Jacob. <sup>43</sup> But Solomon built him an house. <sup>48</sup> Howbeit <sup>2</sup> the most High <sup>2</sup> dwelleth not in temples <sup>2</sup> made

<sup>2</sup> Num. xxxii. 5; ver. 5.

<sup>26</sup> Ps. cxxxii. 5

<sup>2</sup> See Lu. i. 32.

<sup>26</sup> Sam. vii. 2.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Kings viii. 20; 1 Chron. xvii. 12; 2 Chron. iii. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Ch. xvii. 24

<sup>2</sup> See Lu. i. 30

So ch. xiii. 22.

<sup>2</sup> Chron. iii. 1.

<sup>2</sup> See Mk. xiv. 58.

<sup>2</sup> See 1 Chron. xxii. 7.

<sup>2</sup> See 1 Kings viii. 27.

<sup>2</sup> See Ex. xxv.

<sup>26</sup> The older authorities read, 'with the hand of the angel.'

<sup>37</sup> He led them out <sup>28</sup> The older authorities omit the words 'the Lord,' and 'your' render 'shall God.'

<sup>39</sup> The older authorities omit 'him shall ye hear.'

<sup>30</sup> in the congregation in the wilderness

<sup>33</sup> would not be obedient

<sup>33</sup> omit 'again.'

<sup>35</sup> did ye offer to me

<sup>37</sup> Some of the older authorities read 'Rephan.'

<sup>39</sup> the Tabernacle of the Testimony

<sup>40</sup> Which also our fathers having received it by succession

<sup>41</sup> read 'Joshua' for 'Jesus.'

<sup>43</sup> or 'at their taking possession of the Gentiles.'

<sup>45</sup> or 'habitation for the God of Jacob.'

<sup>31</sup> living oracles

<sup>34</sup> which shall go before us

<sup>36</sup> for forty years

<sup>38</sup> the figures

- 49 with hands; <sup>44</sup> as saith the prophet, 'Heaven *is* my throne, and earth *is* my footstool: <sup>45</sup> what house will ye build me? saith the Lord: or what *is* the place of my rest? Hath not my hand made <sup>46</sup> all these *things*?'  
 51 Ye <sup>47</sup> stiff-necked and <sup>48</sup> uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always <sup>49</sup> resist the Holy Ghost: <sup>50</sup> as your fathers *did*, so *do* ye.  
 52 <sup>51</sup> Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? <sup>52</sup> and they have slain them which showed before of the coming of <sup>53</sup> the Just One; of whom <sup>54</sup> ye <sup>55</sup> have been now the betrayers and murderers: Who have received the law <sup>56</sup> by the disposition of angels, <sup>57</sup> and have not <sup>58</sup> kept *it*.  
 54 "When they heard these *things*, they were cut to the heart,  
 55 and they <sup>59</sup> gnashed on him *with their teeth*. <sup>60</sup> But he, <sup>61</sup> being full of the Holy Ghost, <sup>62</sup> looked up stedfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing <sup>63</sup> on the right hand of God, And said, Behold, I see <sup>64</sup> the heavens opened, and <sup>65</sup> the Son of man standing <sup>66</sup> on the right hand of God. Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him <sup>67</sup> with one accord, And cast *him* <sup>68</sup> out <sup>69</sup> of the city, and <sup>70</sup> stoned *him*; and <sup>71</sup> the witnesses <sup>72</sup> laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul. <sup>73</sup> And <sup>74</sup> they stoned Stephen, <sup>75</sup> calling upon *God*, <sup>76</sup> and saying, Lord Jesus, <sup>77</sup> receive my spirit. And he <sup>78</sup> kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, <sup>79</sup> Lord, <sup>80</sup> lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, <sup>81</sup> he fell asleep.

<sup>y</sup> See ch. ix. 14.<sup>z</sup> So Ps. xxxi. 5.<sup>a</sup> Mk. xv. 19 (Gk.); Lu. xxii. 41; ch. ix. 40, xx. 36, xxi. 5.

See Eph. iii. 14.

<sup>b</sup> See Mat. v. 44.<sup>c</sup> Mat. xxvii. 15 (Gk.). So Num. xii. 11.<sup>d</sup> See Mat. xxvii. 52.

<sup>44</sup> The older authorities omit 'temples'—dwelleth not in (houses) made with hands.

<sup>45</sup> footstool of my feet

<sup>47</sup> did not your fathers persecute

<sup>49</sup> at the ministration of angels

<sup>51</sup> and rushed upon him

<sup>53</sup> named Saul

<sup>46</sup> did not my hand make

<sup>48</sup> ye were even now

<sup>50</sup> they gnashed their teeth at him

<sup>52</sup> and they cast him out

<sup>54</sup> calling upon (the Lord)

#### INTRODUCTION.—THE SPEECH OF STEPHEN BEFORE THE SANHEDRIM.

##### The Main Argument.

The speech began with a grave and earnest defence of himself and his teaching, in the form of an elaborate historical argument, and passed imperceptibly into a passionate attack on his accusers and judges. He represented himself as arraigned not really as a blasphemer of the holy Temple and the sacred law, but as suffering the same persecution at their hands which the prophets and another still greater had endured from their stiff-necked forefathers.

He commenced this defence with great calm and dignity, choosing as his theme a subject which he knew would command the attention and win the deep interest of his audience. It was the story of the chosen people, told with the warm bright eloquence of one not only himself an ardent

##### Alongside the Main Argument flowed another Stream of Thought.

Never absent from Stephen's mind was his Master's rejection and crucifixion. Every historical allusion secretly but plainly points to it; yet he guards himself from ever mentioning it directly, for fear of being stopped altogether by an outbreak of their jealous rage.

Carried away by his intense passion, he breaks at length through the restraint he had imposed upon himself; and with the last words he was allowed to utter, he tears the veil aside, when he charges his judges with the murder of the Just.

[How each of the great historical allusions made by St. Stephen really pointed to the 'Crucified Jesus,' the following sketch will show.]

So Joseph was sold by the patriarchs into Egypt. [Had they not for envy delivered Christ to

patriot, but also a trained orator and scholar ;—he dwelt on the famous national heroes, with rare skill bringing out the particular events of their brilliant lives, which assisted his great argument.

To Stephen the glorious drama of Israel seemed to fit naturally into three acts—

*The first*—The age of the patriarchs.

*The second*—Moses, his office and work.

*The third*—The times of the prophets.

In each of these the speaker shows how the same Divine hand guided, how the same errors and thanklessness appeared and reappeared among the chosen people.

In the first act, when the children of Israel were still one family, the foremost character was Joseph, the God-taught and divinely-protected ; and his brethren the patriarchs, the fathers of the tribes, represented the stiff-necked opposers of what was right and true, who appeared in later times.

In the second, Moses the great lawgiver was the central figure, as the deliverer and guardian of the people ; and the descendants of the children of Israel, during his long wise rule, continually refused to obey, and tried to thrust him from them.

Moses (in his later life), and the prophets, were the heroes of the third act of Stephen's history of Israel ; but the mention of the stubborn resistance of the people to the messengers of the Eternal stirred up the spirit of the hitherto calm orator, and, after glancing for a moment at the accusation which charged him with lightly esteeming the Temple, he again turns to the crowning wickedness of his forefathers, who persecuted and slew the prophets, and in a flame of righteous anger he accuses his accusers of being themselves murderers of the Just One. But here he is violently interrupted, and hurried to the last scene without the walls.

There is no doubt but that the close of Stephen's defence would have contained, like the sermons of Peter in the second and third chapters of this book, the offer of pardon and reconciliation through the very blood they had caused to be poured out. To this the structure of the whole speech pointed ; they had but to acknowledge their error and their sin, and all would be forgiven. Stephen would probably have ended with a picture of a new and golden age for humbled and redeemed Israel. So far, these early Christian sermons were constructed on the same lines. If Israel would even now, at the twelfth hour, seek His face, all would yet be well. The great speech of Stephen, however, differs from the addresses of Peter in its broad, all-embracing view of the history of the chosen people. What a magnificent conception, in the eyes of a child of Israel, were those instances of the life-work of Joseph and Moses, both in their turn and degree, God-sent regenerators of the loved people, both in their turn, too, rejected and misunderstood by those with whom their mission lay, but justified and glorified by the unanimous voice of history, which has surrounded the men and their work with a halo of glory, growing only brighter as the centuries multiplied ! Might it not be the same with that great One who had done such mighty works, and spoken such sweet glorious words, but whom *they* had rejected and crucified ?

In Stephen's noble words we miss that lofty

Pilate?] But God was with both : He delivered Joseph out of all his troubles, [as He raised up Jesus from the grave]. He made one ruler of Egypt, [and the other ruler of the Church and the world].

The brethren of Moses understood not his mission ; [so Christ came to His own, and His own received Him not]. They resisted Moses the deliverer again and again : [you have crucified Jesus your Redeemer].

They preferred the tabernacle of Moloch to My tabernacle, and the star of their god Remphan to My pillar of fire and cloud. [So now you have preferred the lifeless stones of this Temple, and the now meaningless ritual of a dying law, to the love of the Temple's Master, and His command to substitute for a ritual a life].

And yet in spite of their foolish hard-hearted rejection, first of Joseph, then, on a greater scale, of Moses, God overruled all, and positively against their will delivered first the sons of Jacob by the hand of the outraged Joseph, and afterwards the whole people by the hand of His servant Moses.

This third division was never completed, but we can see clearly what was in Stephen's mind while he was speaking it. We see how it would have proceeded had the Sanhedrim allowed him to go on with his speech to the end.

Their fathers had persecuted Joseph, and again and again had refused Moses. Later, they had persecuted and slain the prophets, and now they had murdered the Just. But as before in the case of Joseph, and still more conspicuously in the case of Moses, their God had in spite of themselves redeemed them and saved them ; so He would again ; even now, after their deepest crime, if they would but return to Him, and seek through the blood of the Crucified pardon and life. But this last thought the martyr was not allowed to utter.

and sublime calm, that unruffled dignity which neither insult nor danger could disturb, so remarkable in the sermons and addresses of Peter. The Twelve who had been with Jesus, alone seem to have possessed this sweet brave confidence, which nothing on this earth could shake or affect.

Such a view as this in no way detracts from the character or the work of a Stephen, and later of a Paul, who in much takes the first martyr as his model. There was ample room in the great world-field for both these characters. The passionate fervour of these later called ones, perhaps, was even more effectual in the great work than the still, unruffled calm of the older apostles.

Ver. 1. Then said the high priest, Are these things so ? A hush seems to have fallen on the council as they watched that strange unearthly brightness light up the countenance of the accused, and in silence all gazed on the rapt expression of that face which seemed to his enemies the face of an angel.

The high priest breaks the silence, but his gentle question betrays his emotion, very different from the rougher address of Caiaphas to our Lord (Matt. xxvi. 62), or to the harsh command of the high priest Ananias when he bade his officers smite the prisoner Paul on the mouth when he was examined before the council (Acts xxiii. 2). He simply asks him, Are you really guilty of impious blasphemies against the Temple and the law ?

*First Division of the Speech, 2-16.—The Age of the Patriarchs Abraham and Joseph.*

(a) Vers. 2-8. *Abraham the father of the faithful.*—Stephen relates the well-known incident, fraught with such mighty consequences for the chosen people, of the appearance of the visible glory of the Lord to the great father of the race, Abraham; but the visible glory appeared to and spoke with Abraham 'when as yet he had no child,' that is, before even Isaac, the father of Jacob, from whom sprang the twelve tribes, was born.

[*The promise of love and protection then was made to Abraham the father of faithful trusting souls, rather than to Abraham the ancestor of the race.*]

Abraham was only a stranger (as were also Isaac and Jacob, and his sons the twelve patriarchs) in that country which the Jews call the Holy Land: 'He gave him none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on.'

[*God then was the Protector of Abraham and the patriarchs when they were wanderers, independent of any peculiar country.*]

The promise of the glorious inheritance was made to our forefather Abraham before God instituted the sacrament of circumcision, and entered thereby into a formal covenant with him and his descendants.

[*Thus the promise to Abraham and his posterity stands clear of the legal sacrament.*]

Ver. 2. *The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham.* That is, this God whose peculiar characteristic in the eyes of the Hebrew people was that visible shining brightness, that outward expression of majesty, the celestial splendour, which as a pillar of fire guided the desert wanderings, which as the Shekinah rested on the mercy-seat of the ark of the covenant in the Tabernacle and in the Temple. Paul speaks of this glory as one of the peculiar distinctions with which God honoured His own peculiar people (see Rom. ix. 14). It was the God whose visible symbol was that glory so well known by every child of Israel, who appeared to Abraham, the father of the race.

*When he was in Mesopotamia.* Ur of the Chaldees, where Abraham first resided (Gen. xi. 28), lay probably in the extreme north of Mesopotamia, near the sources of the Tigris.

*Before he dwelt in Charran.* In the Hebrew text, Haran; LXX., Charran. The Carrhae of the Latin writers, the scene of the disastrous defeat of the Triumvir Crassus, B.C. 51 (Lucan, i. 104; Plin. v. 24).

Ver. 4. *When his father was dead.* For remarks upon this and the other alleged discrepancies between the statements advanced by Stephen and those contained in the Old Testament history, see the detailed remarks on the short Excursus below. A strange interpretation of the expression 'was dead,' has been accepted by some commentators of high reputation. There is a tradition (found originally in the Talmud) among the Jews, that Terah, the father of Abraham, relapsed into idolatry during the abode at Haran, and that Abraham departed from him on account of this apostasy. 'When his father was dead,' then, according to this view, signifies, 'When his father was spiritually dead, then his son left him in the land of the Chaldeans.' But that the words possess such a mystic sense is

most improbable; the plain obvious meaning, in spite of the chronological difficulty which it involves, must be maintained—that is, after his father's death, Abraham removed into Canaan.

Ver. 5. *And he gave him none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on.* This is confirmed by the circumstances related in ver. 16, where we read how the very grave of the patriarchs in the Promised Land was purchased by Abraham from the possessors and princes of the country.

Ver. 6. *And God spake on this wise.* Stephen here quotes the passage to which he had been previously alluding, with a very slight variation, from the LXX. of Gen. xv. 14, 15, the very words spoken by the Eternal to Abraham His friend, containing the promise, and also an intimation that its fulfilment must not be expected for a long period of years. It was a touching reminder to his hearers, how mistaken they were to set so superstitious a value on ground of which their great ancestors the friends and specially-protected ones of God had no tenure.

Ver. 7. *And serve me in this place.* A quotation from the words of the Eternal spoken to Moses in the burning bush on Mount Horeb: 'In this place'—that is, where I now speak to thee. In the passage of Ex. iii. 12, the words are: 'Ye shall serve God upon the mountain,' again reminding the elders of Israel from their own holy oracles that God was to be found in other countries besides the Holy Land, that He was to be worshipped in other places besides in that holy house on Zion. Did He not manifest Himself as visibly and resplendently in the burning thorn of the wilderness as ever He did on the golden mercy-seat of the sacred ark of the covenant?

Ver. 8. *And he gave him the covenant of circumcision: and so Abraham begat Isaac.* That is, God made with him the covenant, of which circumcision is the outward sign; and so (*scilicet, thus*), in accordance with the terms of the covenant, God gave a son to Abraham, and Abraham, on his part, circumcised his son. Dean Goulburn, in his *Acts of the Deacons*, calls attention here to the fact that the whole of the Pauline theology finds its germs in this apology of Stephen. Paul's assertion that faith was reckoned to Abraham when he was in uncircumcision, is merely the unfolding of Stephen's historical statement that God, subsequently to the call and promise, gave Abraham the covenant of circumcision.

(b) Vers. 9-16. *Joseph.*—Passing from the first appearance of the visible glory to the great ancestor, and the promise made by the Eternal to him, a wanderer without land and without a home,—after glancing at the fortunes of his immediate descendants, who still enjoyed the special protection of the Highest, but always wanderers and strangers in the countries where they dwelt,—he comes to the times of *Joseph*, who, as minister of Pharaoh and responsible ruler over Egypt, inaugurated what may be termed the second period in the history of the children of Israel. The first, the age of the wanderings, was closed by the permanent settlement of the people in Egypt under the auspices of Joseph. During this period of great prosperity, and later, of bitter adversity, the small tribe of wanderers becomes a mighty people; but Stephen only uses the history of these times as a background for the great figure of Joseph, the Egyptian ruler. He dwells on the betrayal of the

innocent by his jealous brothers, the famous ancestors of the twelve tribes, and then shows how God delivered the betrayed one, and then raised him to a position of glory and power undreamed of by any child of Abraham, and placed him so high that he was enabled to come to the succour of his father's children and their families, and to be at once their preserver and benefactor. [Did not this sketch of the well-known fortunes of one of the most distinguished of the Hebrews in a remarkable manner suggest to every one of those Jewish priests and doctors a strange parallel between Joseph and Another who had been betrayed too by His brother Jews, and who (as Stephen and his fellow-believers maintained), after the betrayal, had been crowned too with glory and power?]

**Ver. 9. The patriarchs.** The sons of Jacob received the title of 'patriarchs' as being the ancestors of the twelve tribes (*πατριάρχαι*, LXX.). This is the first mention of that jealous, hard-hearted spirit in Israel which, as Stephen proceeds with the story of the chosen people, becomes so sorrowfully prominent, and which, he shows, ended in the murder of the Righteous One.

**Ver. 10. And wisdom.** This, of course, includes Joseph's interpretation of the royal dreams, but has more especial reference to his wisdom in striking out a new system of governing the land of Egypt, and of administering and developing the finances of that great kingdom.

**Pharaoh.** This is not a proper name, but was the common title of the ancient sovereigns of Egypt. It signifies in the ancient Egyptian, 'the king.' In after ages, in the Græco-Macedonian period, the common title of the monarchs of the country was Ptolemy (which signifies in the Greek, 'warrior').

We have a well-known instance of these royal appellatives in the 'Cæsars' of Rome, a designation which, under the Teutonized form of 'Kaiser' in the German and Austrian Empires, and in the Russian form of 'Czar,' continues in our own times.

**Governor over Egypt.** Joseph fulfilled the functions of the Vizier or Prime Minister of Pharaoh. The power delegated to him by his master seems to have been almost without limit.

**Ver. 12. There was corn in Egypt.** Egypt was the great corn-growing country of the old world. In later times it became the principal granary of Rome (see Acts xxvii. 6-38).

**Ver. 13. Joseph's kindred was made known unto Pharaoh.** The name of Joseph is repeated (it occurred before in this verse) with some pride by Stephen. The fact of these wandering shepherd ancestors of the Jews being presented at the court of the magnificent Pharaoh of Egypt as the near kinsfolk of that wise and renowned minister Joseph, was evidently a proud memory in Israel.

**Ver. 14. And called his father Jacob, and all his kindred, threescore and fifteen souls.** Another memory of Divine favour which Stephen knew would be very grateful to the zealous Jews who sat as judges in that stern council. How the Eternal must have loved the people and prospered them! for from this small family sprang that mighty host which was 'as the stars of heaven for multitude' (Deut. x. 22).

*Second Division of the Speech, 17-36.—  
The Age of Moses.*

The second part of the defence commences with the long-looked-for approach of the time

when 'the promise,' now centuries old, should be fulfilled. Nothing apparently seemed less likely than that that vast horde of enslaved dispirited children of Israel, living a degraded and unhappy existence in Egypt, would in a few years, after the revelation to Moses, be in possession of the rich and desired land of Canaan, which was then held by a polished and warlike people. But with the appointed hour, the God of Israel raised up the man who should work this mighty deliverance for His people. But, as in the case of the first deliverer of the children of Israel (Joseph), though brought about in a very different way, so with the second: the people, his brethren, refused to listen to him; they were the cause of his expulsion and banishment from the country, though he held the position of a prince of the royal house of Egypt. It was literally against their will that Moses became their saviour.

This part of the speech (17-28) deals with the wrongs and injustice which the great patriot and deliverer had to suffer at the hands of the Jews, his fellow-countrymen and kinsmen. From the 28th verse to the 36th, Stephen relates the Theophany of the burning bush in almost the words of Ex. iii., and closes this part of his defence by dwelling on the fact, that this very Moses, whom the chosen people refused to acknowledge as ruler and judge, God sent to be not only their ruler but their deliverer.

**Ver. 17. The people grew and multiplied in Egypt.** They increased so rapidly in power as well as in numbers, that the jealousy of the reigning dynasty was excited against them. The marvellous increase of the little shepherd family, who had been settled in Egypt some two hundred years previously by the minister Joseph, was well calculated to alarm the advisers of a Pharaoh who knew nothing of the claims of the Hebrew tribes upon the goodwill of the country.

**Ver. 18. Till another king arose, which knew not Joseph.** This new king was Amasis or Ahmes, the first of the eighteenth dynasty, or that of the Diospolitans from Thebes. It is probable that this oppressor of the Hebrews was the first native prince who reigned after the expulsion of the Hyksos or shepherd kings. The expulsion of these Hyksos seems connected in some way with the bitter hatred with which the Hebrews were now regarded in the land; but our knowledge of the history of ancient Egypt is too uncertain to admit of any positive statement here.

**Ver. 19. The same dealt subtly with our kindred, and evil entreated our fathers, so that they cast out their young children, to the end they might not live.** Meyer and Hackett understand the language of this verse as setting forth the cruel policy of Pharaoh towards the children of Israel; in other words, they dealt so cruelly with these Hebrews, they made their lives so unendurable, that these unhappy ones destroyed their children, that they might not grow up to experience the wretched fate of their fathers. But this construction of the passage, which introduces a new feature into the history, is grammatically unnecessary. The verse simply tells us that, among other cruel acts, Pharaoh, with the hope of checking the increase of this strange tribe, gave a general command to his officials to cast the newborn sons of the Israelites into the Nile.

**Ver. 20. In which time. That is, in this season of terror and of bitter oppression.**

Moses was born, and was exceeding fair. Tradition writes of him as 'being beautiful as an angel.' Josephus speaks of his Divine beauty. Philo also called especial attention to it, and tells us how 'those who met him as he was carried along the streets, not merely gazed at the face of the child, but, forgetting other business, stood still for a long time to look at him; for, so great was the child's beauty, that it captivated and detained the beholders.'

The expression in the Greek original, *ὑπερβολῶς ὡραῖος*, rendered *exceeding fair*, is a very strong superlative, and is known in classical Greek. See Hesiod, *Works and Days*, 825: 'blameless unto the immortals,' or perfectly blameless; 'with the gods' (see, too, *Agam. Aesch.* 352). We read also of Nineveh in the LXX., a city 'great unto God,' 'an exceeding great city,' *Jonah* iii. 2 ('that great city,' Authorised Version).

In his father's house. His father's name was Amram.

Ver. 21. Pharaoh's daughter. Josephus tells that the name of this princess was Thermutis.

Took him up surely signifies, 'lifted him up out of the water.' This is better than to understand the words, as does deWette, and also Hackett, in the sense of 'adopted.' The next sentence goes on with the infant's subsequent adoption by the princess.

For her own son. There is a Jewish tradition that, after his adoption by the daughter of the sovereign, Moses was chosen as Pharaoh's successor.

Ver. 22. And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. Egypt was even at that early period famed for her learning, for her proficiency in art and science. We find the wisest of the Greeks visiting this land in search of wisdom. It is reasonable to suppose that 'the adopted' of Pharaoh's daughter was instructed in all the varied branches of learning cultivated and prized in the country. The writings of Philo, which fairly represent the Jewish traditions which were of authority in the days of Stephen, enter into minute details concerning this 'wisdom' of Egypt in which Moses was learned. Philo also relates how this adopted son of the Pharaohs was further instructed by Grecian, Assyrian, and Chaldean teachers.

The statement of Stephen respecting the learning of Moses is not derived from any Old Testament source, but solely from those Jewish traditions we have so often alluded to as used in this speech, and which were evidently authoritative in their time.

Wordsworth quotes here the quaint but beautiful words of Augustine on this passage, in which he argues for the consecration of heathen literature to the service of Christianity. 'Do not we see,' he writes, 'how Cyprian came laden out of Egypt with much gold and silver and raiment—Cyprian, that most persuasive of teachers, that most blessed martyr; how, too, similarly laden, came out Lactantius, Victorinus, Optatus, Hilarius, not to speak of living men?' Augustine, by his mention thus of these famous Christian teachers, all deeply learned, shows how highly *he* estimates what is termed profane learning in the training of the teachers of the Gospel.

Mighty in words. By nature Moses seems to have been 'slow of speech' (*Ex.* iv. 10). He was evidently distrustful of his own powers, but God

turned this slowness of speech into the most fervid eloquence, of which we possess many instances in his great and stirring life. Josephus preserves the tradition current among the Jews, that Moses was very able to persuade the people by his speaking (see *Ant.* iii. 1. 4).

And in deeds. Stephen does not here allude to his later works in Egypt and in the wilderness, but to the deeds of his early life. The Old Testament is silent here, but Josephus mentions one of these, 'How, when the Ethiopians invaded Egypt, Moses was the general of the army which defeated them' (*Ant.* ii. 10. 1).

Ver. 23. And, when he was full forty years old. The Hebrews lived in a separate district of their own, and Moses, one of the royal family, the adopted son of the daughter of the Pharaoh, no doubt during these first forty years of his life had little to do with his kinsmen. In this verse and in verses 30 and 36, Stephen divides the life of Moses into three exact periods, each of forty years. This division, afterwards current among the Jews, is not found in the Old Testament. *Deut.* xxxiv. 7 states that the whole age of Moses was 120 years. In *Ex.* xxi. 32, we hear that the time spent in the desert wanderings was forty years; and *Ex.* vii. 7 mentions that when he stood before Pharaoh, he was eighty years old; but the Pentateuch gives no hint of the time that he spent in Egypt before his flight to Midian. In the *Bereshith Rabba* it is said, 'Moses lived in the palace of Pharaoh forty years; in Midian, forty years; and for forty years he ministered to Israel.' This repeats the statement of Stephen, who doubtless quoted from the traditional history generally received in his times. Wordsworth, commenting on this verse, calls attention to the mystic triple division of the life of the great lawgiver, and points out how often the number forty occurs in the recital of the most important events of sacred history:

In the history of the flood,	. Gen. vii. 4.
Moses in the mount before	. Exod. xxiv. 18,
the giving of the law,	. xxxiv. 23.
Elijah before coming to Horeb,	. 1 Kings xix. 8.
The probation of Nineveh,	. Jonah iii. 4.

Before our Lord's presentation	. Luke ii. 22.
in the Temple,	. Matt. iv. 2.
His fasting,	. Acts i. 3.
The resurrection-life between	
resurrection and ascension,	

It came into his heart to visit his brethren the children of Israel. In the midst of all his busy life with the great ones of Egypt, while dwelling in the palace of the Pharaoh, the thought of his own race and people toiling at their hard tasks, building, as slaves for their masters, cities and fortresses,—probably, too, among their works, some of those pyramids we know so well,—he obeyed the impulse, and went and pondered over the life they were leading. While looking at one of the working parties of these Israelites toiling under the superintendence of Egyptian taskmasters, the episode related in the following verses took place. It is told almost word for word, though slightly abbreviated from the Exodus history.

Ver. 24. Suffer wrong. That is, injured by blows, as in *Ex.* ii. 11.

And smote the Egyptian. He struck the



Egyptian who did the wrong so as to kill him. 'The Egyptian,' simply without any previous allusion, because the story was so well known.

Ver. 25. **He supposed his brethren would have understood.** Some communication had probably taken place between him and his kinsmen since the time when it had first come into Moses' heart to visit his brethren; and now such an act on the part of a kinsman holding so exalted a rank in Egypt ought to have given the oppressed people confidence in him. Moses vainly thought that this people, remembering their early history and the glorious promises of God, would at once have recognised in the doer of so bold an action on their behalf, a deliverer sent by that God.

**But they understood not.** Then as ever in the history of the chosen people, wilful misunderstanding on their part, of the ways and works of the Eternal, their Protector.

We seem to hear in these words, telling the old, often-repeated story of the Egyptian deliverance, the voice of Stephen changing for a moment into a voice of bitter, sorrowful reproach. No, they misunderstood their God *then as now*.

Ver. 27. **Who made thee a ruler and a judge over us?** The words of these Israelites evidently express the general feelings of all the people toward Moses at this juncture, and so he understood them.

Vers. 28, 29. **Wilt thou kill me, as thou diddest the Egyptian yesterday? Then fled Moses at this saying.** De Wette calls attention here to the history of Exodus, which relates how Moses, after his public act of rebellion against the state policy towards the Hebrews, fled from the face of Pharaoh, who was fearfully incensed that one of his own royal house should presume publicly to slay an official in the discharge of his duty, and by so doing signify his extreme disapproval of the policy of the king and his advisers (Ex. ii. 15). Stephen, on the other hand, seems to connect the flight of Moses with the rejection of his kinsmen. The two accounts, however, in no way contradict each other. When the act was publicly known, the Pharaoh's court was, of course, no longer a home for the patriot prince who loved his own poor oppressed people better than the splendid future which lay before him if he would only forget his nationality (Heb. xi. 25, 26). He was proscribed and disinherited at once, and was obliged to fly from the face of Pharaoh for his life; while the determined and stubborn hostility of the very **race** for whom he was making so great a sacrifice prevented him from seeking, as he naturally would under the circumstances of his exile have done, a place of concealment among them, where he might have concerted some plan of national deliverance.

**In the land of Midian,** or Midian. It was a part of Arabia Petræa, and lay along the eastern branch of the Red Sea, the Elanitic Gulf; it reached to the wilderness of Sinai on one side, and the territory of Moab on the other.

Glaag mentions that in some travels in the Middle Ages, there is an account of the ruins of a city called Midian, on the shores of the Elanitic Gulf. The Midianites of Jethro's tribe were perhaps a nomad detachment of the people which wandered in the Arabian desert.

Ver. 30. **In the wilderness of Mount Sinai.** In Ex. iii. 1, the flaming fire in the bush appeared to Moses at Horeb. In the Pentateuch,

the names of Sinai and Horeb appear to be used indiscriminately. In the New Testament and in Josephus, the name Sinai only occurs. Horeb appears really to be the general name for the whole mountain range; Sinai, the name of the particular mountain from which the law was given.

**An angel.** 'Here, as continually in the Old Testament, the angel bears the authority and presence of God Himself; which angel, since God *giveth not His glory to another*, must have been the great Angel of the Covenant, of whom Isaiah writes, "In all their affliction He was afflicted, and the Angel of His presence saved them" (Isa. lxiii. 9), the Son of God;' so Alford, correctly. The Angel of the bush here appropriates, as He does in many other places, the titles of the Supreme Eternal One; for, speaking out of the bush which burned and yet was never consumed, He says, 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. . . . I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt . . . and I am come down to deliver them' (Ex. iii. 6-8).

**In a flame of fire.** The radiant light which belonged to the visible glory of God. We hear of it in the pillar of fire seen so many years in the desert wanderings, in the glory which ever and anon appeared between the cherubim over the mercy-seat of the ark, in the luminous cloud which filled the Temple on the occasion of the solemn dedication by King Solomon. The Rabbis termed it the Shekinah.

Ver. 33. **Put off thy shoes from thy feet: for the place where thou standest is holy ground.** It was, and is still, in the East a mark of reverence to take off the shoes or sandals in the presence of a superior. The manifestation of the Deity made the space round the bush holy ground. In our own time, the Mohammedans always enter their mosques barefoot. It was a maxim among the Pythagoreans, that those conducting sacrifice and worship should be without shoes or sandals on their feet. In the holy places on Mount Gerizim at the present time, the Samaritans minister and worship with bare feet. This spot was expressly called by the 'Angel' holy ground; thus, other places besides the Temple on Mount Zion were holy to the Lord. Stephen indirectly argues from this, that although God had revealed Himself in a particular spot, it did not follow that that place remained as an everlasting sanctuary. Holiness, in fact, belonged to no exclusive earthly sanctuary. 'Where is the house that ye build unto Me, and where is the place of My rest?' (Isa. lxvi. 1).

There was no Temple there, said St. Chrysostom; yet the place was holy, owing to the appearance and work of Christ.

Ver. 34. **And am come down to deliver them.** That is, from His throne in heaven. This is the ordinary language used when speaking of the Eternal in His relations with men. So Isa. lxvi. 1: 'Thus saith the Lord, Heaven is My throne, and earth is My footstool.'

Ver. 35. **This Moses.** Very impressively and with marked emphasis, Stephen, in vers. 35-38, four times repeats the demonstrative pronoun thus: 'This Moses,' 'This is that Moses,' 'This is he,' etc., whom the children of Israel refused, but whom God marked with such distinguished honour. By men rejected, but by God exalted to be ruler and deliverer; the miracle-worker in

Egypt, in the Red Sea, in the desert; the one among men whom the great Prophet (the Messiah) afterwards to be raised up, should resemble; the friend of the 'Angel' of the wilderness from whom he received the sacred law: this was he whom our fathers chose to thrust from them! [Might not those judges of the Sanhedrim conclude from this awful lesson of the past, that it does not follow that God rejects him whom they had rejected?]

The parallel between the great Hebrew lawgiver and his own crucified Master, scarcely veiled at first, except by the studied concealment of the name of Jesus Christ, as the argument proceeds, becomes closer and more marked. The choice of the titles which Stephen gives to Moses is evidently suggested by the striking parallel ever in his mind. They rejected Moses as ruler and judge; but God sent him to be their ruler, and designing him for an office far higher than that of judge, caused him to become 'redeemer' of the whole nation.

**Ver. 36. He brought them out, after that he showed wonders and signs.** Drawing the noble picture contained in this and the preceding verses of Moses 'our Rabbi,' as the Jews love to call him, of whom they are so proud, Stephen shows how utterly absurd was any charge brought against him of blasphemy against one whom he admired with so ungrudging an admiration, and loved with so deep a love.

Thus, each of the first two epochs into which Stephen had divided Israel's eventful story, in spite of the stubborn hard heart of their forefathers in rejecting—

(a) Joseph,

(b) Moses,

had ended in their being delivered by their Divine Protector—

(a) By the hand of Joseph,

(b) By the hand of Moses,

out of all the troubles and afflictions which surrounded them.

In the *first epoch*, the origin of the chosen people is recounted, and how the Lord God came to choose them out of all the tribes of the earth; but in it they never became more than a large family of wandering shepherds, and their difficulties and dangers were only those incidental to nomade shepherd life in the East.

In the *second epoch*, the 'shepherds' are settled in a rich and fertile country. In the course of a couple of centuries they multiply with a wonderful (perhaps a supernatural) rapidity, and become, in numbers at least, a mighty people. Owing to political convulsions and other causes to us unknown, the whole race is reduced to a state of miserable slavery by the warlike caste then in power in Egypt; but their Divine Protector through all has not lost sight of them, and, literally against their will, by a mighty exercise of power, delivers them out of all their misery by the hand of His servant Moses.

The *third* and the greatest *epoch* in the history of the chosen people commences in the wilderness. The children of Israel, now free and strong, are united under the supreme command of that Moses whom they had so repeatedly refused to obey. The history of this epoch—lasting from the hour when Moses led the armies of Israel out of Egypt until that present day when Stephen was telling before the Sanhedrim the wondrous story—would have been closed, as were the first and second,

with the recital of another but far grander Divine rescue, and that, too, in spite of all hard-hearted rejection by the people whom God loved with a love, as Stephen wished to show, that nothing could quench.

But this, as we shall see, was never destined to be told. We have, then, only a splendid fragment of the last and greatest portion of Stephen's speech.

#### *Third Division of Stephen's Speech.*

**Vers. 37-53. Moses and the Prophets.**—Moses is again the central figure of the history, but now he stands forward as the great deliverer of the people. Stephen has described (ver. 36) his marvellous powers, and now shows how, in his constant communion with unseen beings (vers. 38-53), he stood alone in his strange, weird grandeur above other men. On two of his supernatural gifts the speaker dwells—(1) on his likeness to the greater Prophet (the Messiah), whose coming he foretold; (2) on his friendship and communion with the Almighty Being of Mount Sinai. It was this man, their benefactor, the friend of their God, whom they again and again refused to obey; but this folly and sin of Israel was speedily avenged, for, instead of serving the one true God, who hitherto in so marvellous a manner had been their deliverer and guardian, they worshipped the host of heaven, and took up the Tabernacle of Moloch, the created instead of the Creator. It was as though their God had given them up as slaves to the unworthy objects of their shameful adoration. But the mention of the *Tabernacle of Moloch*, that false idol to which in their desert wanderings Israel had transferred its homage, brings Stephen to speak of another Tabernacle, that first sacred model of the house on Mount Zion he was accused of despising and speaking lightly of—the Tabernacle of Witness, made after the very pattern which the Most Highest had given to His servant Moses. He rapidly sketches the history of this sacred tent, the first earthly resting-place of the visible glory, and goes on to speak of the building of the Temple—not, however, accomplished by David, the man after God's own heart, but by Solomon. Now, Stephen was charged with teaching the transitory nature of the Temple, so he shows them how a far holier sanctuary than the one then glittering in all its stately beauty in their loved city had already passed away. The minds of his audience, too, he well knew were remembering, as he was speaking of these things—the lost ark of the covenant, the tables of stone written in by no mortal hand, and other holy things now lost to them for ever, which had formed the furniture of the Tabernacle which existed no more. Was not the transitory nature of all these things in accordance with the Eternal's own words, 'Heaven is My throne. . . . What manner of house will ye build Me? saith the Lord.' And here it was, in God's good pleasure, that the wondrous argument closed; perhaps the church was not yet fully ripe to receive so broad a view of its destined work and office as Stephen would evidently have painted in the exordium of his long discourse. It was one of Stephen's audience who in later years really spoke the close of that famous sermon before the Sanhedrim—the *young man Saul*. Then Stephen spoke a few more sentences, but they were hurried, unfinished, deeply tinged with righteous anger. He was entering on the story of the prophets of Israel, and what they

wished to teach the reluctant, stubborn people; but the thought of the sufferings of these brave and persecuted soldiers of his Master, whose history was closed by the murder of 'the Just,' whose fate—he read in the fierce, unrelenting countenances before him—he was doomed to share, carried him away, and the calm and skilful advocate of a hated cause, the persuasive, winning orator, became the accuser of his judges and his erring countrymen; and so the speech was brought to a sudden end, the words of the speaker being lost in a loud indignant clamour. The martyr's death soon followed.

Ver. 37. *This is that Moses, which said unto the children of Israel, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you, like unto me* (see note on Acts iii. 22). While speaking generally of the singular favour which Moses enjoyed, Stephen instances, vers. 37, 38, two circumstances of that Divine favour, each peculiarly interesting to his countrymen even after the lapse of so many centuries. The one here mentioned was that the great Prophet, the Messiah, pondered over by the pious Jew for so many weary years, waited for by every patriot heart in Israel with such intense passionate longing, would be *like Moses, as I am, as myself*. To the words of their lawgiver, Stephen adds nothing: no comment was needed here in that silent listening hall; it was well known that Stephen and those that thought with him among the people, believed the prophet like unto Moses had then arisen, and had given out His message of love and wrath. Who would dare to accuse Stephen of blaspheming Moses, of whom he spoke with such exceeding reverence? But, on the other hand, did not he charge his judges with treating their Lawgiver with scorn, seeing they had rejected and crucified the Prophet '*like unto himself*'?

Ver. 38. *This is he, that was in the church in the wilderness.* 'God's church,' writes Wordsworth here, 'is not limited to *Judea*. It was in the *wilderness*; and *there* Moses, your great lawgiver, was with it; and remember he *died* there in the wilderness, and was never permitted to enter the Promised Land, to which you would restrain the favours of God.'

With the angel which spake to him in the mount Sinai. The second special instance of Divine favour was his solitary communing with the great covenant Angel, the Almighty Being who, under the name Jehovah (the Eternal One), chose Israel as His peculiar people. The solemn words of Deut. xxxiv. 10, which sum up the friendship of Moses with the Eternal, tell this best: 'And there arose not a prophet in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face.'

Who received the lively oracles to give unto us. He it was who, from the Eternal of hosts on Sinai, received that sacred law, those living words, the deathless charge which should endure as long as the world endures. So St. Paul estimates the Divine commands of the wilderness, 'Wherefore the law also is holy, and the commandment holy' (Rom. vii. 12).

Ver. 39. *And in their hearts turned back again into Egypt.* They were weary of the severe restraints imposed by the worship of Jehovah, and longed for the idol service of Egypt, and the enjoyment of the licence which was permitted and even sanctioned in most of those ancient systems of idolatry.

Ver. 40. *Gods to go before us.* As the glory of Jehovah had done in the pillar of cloud and fire, and had guided them and led them up through the Red Sea, out of the land of Egypt.

As for this Moses . . . we wot not what is become of him. This was spoken during Moses' stay in the mount of God, when, for forty days, he remained alone with the Eternal and His angels.

Ver. 41. *And they made a calf in those days.* The famous golden calf, made originally under the direction of the high priest Aaron, while his brother was in the mount of God, and which was subsequently destroyed by Moses, seems to have been a representation not of a calf, but of a full-grown bull, and was doubtless intended to represent a well-known Egyptian object of worship, either the Bull Apis adored at Memphis, or the Bull Mnevis worshipped at Heliopolis in Lower Egypt. The Israelites, perhaps from past associations, seem to have been peculiarly attached to this symbol of idolatry; for we find Jeroboam, the first king of Israel, after the separation of the monarchies, setting up, in opposition to the Temple of Solomon at Jerusalem, rival sanctuaries at Bethel and at Dan, dedicated each to 'a golden calf' (1 Kings xii. 28). The strange attachment of the people to these idols is borne witness to by such passages as 2 Kings xi. 29, when kings like Jehu, famous for their enmity to idolatry, allowed these 'golden calves' and their sanctuaries to remain in the land.

The explanation of this attachment of the children of Israel to this calf or bull worship is, that they persuaded themselves that it was the visible image or emblem of Jehovah the God of Israel. They had seen it worshipped in old days in Memphis or in On, and there it was the visible symbol of the Sun or of Osiris, and perhaps they loved to identify these with the Eternal One who had chosen Israel to be His people. There was much to attract the heart of man in the picturesque ritual with which these Egyptian deities were worshipped, and the wild licence which was permitted and even encouraged at some of their festivals presented a singular contrast to the simple worship of Jehovah, and the stern purity and severity of His moral law. The worship of these golden calves of Aaron, and later, of King Jeroboam, seems an attempt to continue the worship of the God of Israel, the God of their fathers, and then to enjoy still the benefits of their almighty Protector, without at the same time giving up the unlawful pleasures sanctioned and even encouraged by a less austere religion.

Ver. 42. *Then God turned.* That is, changed towards them, withdrew from them His favour, laid no check upon their passions and follies (see Acts xiv. 16); and they, abandoned by their God and left to themselves, sunk into a more degraded form of idolatry still.

The host of heaven. The stars and the sun and moon. This form of idol-worship is called Sabæism, from שָׁבַע (*sha: a*), a host (the host of heaven). This idolatry prevailed especially in Chaldea, and also in Phœnicia, as well as in Egypt. The worship of Baal, so often referred to in the history of Israel, probably is what Stephen alludes to—Baal-Shemesh. The sun-god was one of the most popular of the Phœnician deities in Tyre, and also in the great Phœnician colony of Carthage.

**Book of the prophets.** The twelve so-called minor prophets are here referred to. These short prophecies were reckoned by the Jews as one book. The passage quoted here is from Amos v. 25-27.

**O ye house of Israel, have ye offered to me slain beasts and sacrifices by the space of forty years in the wilderness?** This is a quotation, with very trivial alterations, from the LXX. of Amos v. 25-27. The question, *μή σφάγια, κ. τ. λ.*, requires a negative answer. Through the prophet, God is understood to be asking the terrible question: 'Have ye offered to Me slain beasts and sacrifices during the forty years spent in the desert? Surely you do not pretend to say that you have? You have even taken up the Tabernacle of Moloch,' etc. Nor is this accusation of Amos quoted by Stephen any contradiction of the story of the Pentateuch, which speaks of the ordinary daily sacrifice to the Lord during the desert wanderings prescribed by the Mosaic ritual; for what counted in God's eyes the bare, cold, official rites and sacrifices performed by priests and officials under the immediate influence of Moses, compared to the free, spontaneous offerings made, and to the service done by the people to the golden calves or the host of heaven?

The punishment inflicted by Jehovah upon the whole race—all being delivered out of Egypt, *none*, with two solitary exceptions, being permitted to set foot in the Land of Promise—tells its own story, and shows that the words of Amos quoted here were no exaggerated rhetorical statement, but that even during those long wanderings in the desert, when the power and the love of the Eternal was being daily shown to every child of Israel—while the manna was falling round their tents to feed that great host in those scorched, arid valleys, while the pillar of fire and cloud above their heads was guiding their uncertain steps—even then they deserted His worship for that of Moloch and Baal.

**Ver. 43. Yea, ye took up the tabernacle of Moloch.** This Tabernacle was a small portable tent which sheltered the image of the idol; this they carried about with them from one place of encampment to another in solemn procession, in imitation of the Tabernacle constructed by Moses after the pattern received by him in the mount. Moloch was most probably identical with the Tyrian Baal (Baal-Shemesh), the sun-god. In the rabbinical tradition respecting the worship paid to this deity, a fire was kindled beneath the idol, which was a hollow figure with the head of an ox with outstretched arms: a child was placed in the arms of the figure, and thus was burned to death, while the priests beat their drums so as to stifle the child's cries. The image received the name Tophet from Tophim drums. See 1 Kings xi. 7, where we read of King Solomon erecting a high place to Moloch, the abomination of the children of Ammon; see also Jer. xxxii. 35, and Lev. xviii. 21.

**And the star of your god Remphan.** Remphan or Rephan is the Coptic name for Saturn. This deity (the planet Saturn) was worshipped by the Arabians, the Phœnicians, and Egyptians. The description in *Diodorus Siculus* of the horrid child-sacrifices offered at Carthage to Saturn resembles the rabbinical account of the worship of Moloch. Stephen here quotes verbatim from the LXX., which differs in some respect from the Hebrew of Amos v. 26, which runs thus:—'Ye have borne the Tabernacle of Moloch [so the

Authorised Version, which here must have followed the LXX.; for the Hebrew has, instead of "Moloch" your king, מַלְכֶּם, *mal'kem*] and Chiun.' Rephan, a Coptic word, is supposed generally to be the equivalent for Chiun, an Arabic name for Saturn.

**Beyond Babylon.** The passage in Amos concludes with the words 'beyond Damascus;' but the fulfilment of the prophecy, in the well-known captivity of Babylon, made it natural to substitute for 'Damascus' the name which had become inseparably connected with the great captivity of the people. Such a quotation with the denunciation of the original prophecy intensified, when subsequent history demanded it, was a rabbinical custom (see Meyer here). This change of 'Damascus' into Babylon, therefore, cannot be termed an error of Stephen. The original prediction, besides, did not turn upon the name of the place of the future banishment, but on the fact that one day as a punishment they would be driven beyond the boundaries of their own land.

**Ver. 44. Our fathers had the tabernacle of witness in the wilderness.** The mention of this Tabernacle of Moloch reminds Stephen that he has not yet spoken of the true Tabernacle, where the Eternal had borne witness of Himself, and of the holy Temple, which occupied subsequently the place of the Tabernacle. The words used by Stephen are from the LXX. of Num. xvi. 18, 19, where the sacred tent is called *σκήνη τοῦ μαρτυρίου*, *tabernacle of the witness or the testimony*. It receives this name most probably from the fact of Jehovah giving there witness of Himself in the visible glory, the Shekinah, which at certain times rested on the golden mercy-seat of the ark between the cherubim.

**According to the fashion he had seen.** The superior sanctity of the primitive Tabernacle to the Temple, which afterwards rose in all its stately beauty, is here suggested. The old Tabernacle which has disappeared was fashioned after a pattern given to Moses in the mount by the Eternal and His angels (Ex. xxv. 9-40).

**Ver. 45. Which also our fathers . . . brought in with Joshua.** Stephen is here rapidly sketching the history of the sacred tent of the Witness, which continued to be the sanctuary not merely in the wilderness, but in the land of Canaan, until the age of King Solomon. Our fathers, he says, received it (the Tabernacle) from Moses, and brought it into the Land of Promise, when, with Joshua as their leader, they commenced to take possession of the nations then occupying Canaan, and the expulsion of these peoples was not completed until the days of David.

Here Wordsworth remarks 'that the name of Jesus, though ever in the thoughts of St. Stephen, and as it were hovering on his lips in almost every sentence, is never expressed in his speech, but here, when it does not mean Jesus of Nazareth, but Jesus (or Joshua) the son of Nun. How much wisdom was there in this! If he had openly spoken as he felt concerning Jesus of Nazareth, he would have been stopped at once by the rage of his hearers, and the Christian Church would never have had the speech of St. Stephen: there was Divine eloquence in his silence.'

**Ver. 47. But Solomon built Him an house.** The argument of Stephen here may be paraphrased thus: 'The Temple, against which you accuse me

of having spoken blasphemous words, because I pointed out [as did my Master] that it was a building which would not endure for ever, was first built, not by David, the man after God's own heart, but by Solomon, and replaced an older sanctuary, and one that possessed far holier associations than the Temple, seeing it was designed upon a model which Moses received from the Most Highest. That sacred Tabernacle even was not meant to endure for ever. Is it then blasphemy for me to teach that the Temple which succeeded it was also of a transitory nature? Tabernacle and Temple are alike things belonging to time, and are by no means the necessary or only places in which God could be acceptably worshipped.' It was also in Stephen's mind, no doubt, that in the Temple then standing there was none of the holy furniture of the Tabernacle. The ark and all had been lost; but this fact, though it would have strengthened his argument urging the transitory nature of the sanctuary they so superstitiously loved, would have been an ungenerous one for a true Jew: the bitter humiliation of Israel was not a topic Stephen was likely to have brought forward in his appeal.

**Ver. 48. Howbeit the Most High dwelleth not in temples.** The temple was built at last, but the wise king, its builder, at the solemn dedication, seemed to foresee the superstitious reverence with which they afterwards came to regard this work of man's hand, when, in his beautiful prayer to Jehovah, he asked: 'If God would indeed dwell with men on earth; behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain Thee, much less the house which I have built.' The Isaiah words quoted by Stephen were the burden of all the prophecies. The people had ever loved the Temple more than the God of the Temple, and its ritual more than a self-denying life. This is what Stephen had been teaching, and the martyr knew that for him there was no pardon; they had slain the prophets for the same thing: they would, he felt too surely, slay him now.

**Ver. 51. Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears.** Thus far had Stephen pursued his great argument calmly and without passion, though, as one great division of the history after the other passed before him in review, his style became more fervid, and the reproachful allusions less and less veiled. He had brought down the story of the people to the period of the establishment of the Temple worship and the reign of Solomon, and his view now ranged over a long and gloomy time, when new idolatry, ever more and more repulsive, was constantly being introduced among the people; when the prophets of the Lord were rejected, hunted down, and often murdered; when all spiritual life seemed gradually to have withered away, and to have been replaced, even after the bitter punishment of captivity and exile, only by a barren and selfish formalism; and this long dark avenue of sin and ingratitude was closed by the cross on Mount Calvary, with the figure of the Just One nailed upon it. It was this terrible memory of the last long chapters of the story he was telling, it was the thought above all of the crucifixion of the Just, which filled the soul of Stephen with holy indignation, which found vent in this torrent of rebuke and anger against his guilty judges: the bitter words of reproach which he used were well-known ones, and the imagery was familiar to every Jew.

Compare among many passages Deut. ix. 6, 13, x. 16; Ex. xxxiii. 3-5; Neh. ix. 16. We gather from the traditional history of the nation, that the wickedness of the children of Israel during the period, the contemplation of which roused so fierce a storm of righteous anger in Stephen's heart, was of a darker hue even than that described in the 'kings' and 'prophecies.' Both the Bible history and the traditions were well known to Stephen. Some of these latter were embodied in the Talmud, where, for instance, we read a saying of one of the last monarchs of Israel, Jehoiaqim the son of Josiah, in whose time Jeremiah lived. '*My predecessors*,' scornfully boasted the impious king, '*did not know how to provoke God*' (from the Babylonian Talmud, 'Sanhedrim,' sec. II, quoted in the *Yad* of Maimonides).

**Ver. 52. The Just One.** This title was used by the Jews as a designation of the Messiah. 'This sentence (of Stephen's) seems to have been in the mind of the second apostolic martyr at Jerusalem, St. James, when he wrote his epistle a little before his own martyrdom,' Jas. v. 6 (Wordsworth).

**Ver. 53. Who have received the law by the disposition of angels.** That is to say, 'the Divine law of Moses was announced to Israel, in the first place, by the holy angels acting as the ministers of the Eternal King of heaven; and this glorious law, written by Jehovah and specially communicated to the chosen people by beings not belonging to this earth, you know, neither you nor your fathers have kept!' But an important question underlies the statement contained in this verse. Were angels, then, employed in the giving of the law in the desert of Sinai? Now, on reading the simple text in the Hebrew or the English translation, the first impression is, that no such angelic intervention was employed. Jehovah the great Covenant Angel gives, and Moses the judge of Israel receives, the law in its varied and comprehensive details. On the other hand, it is an undoubted fact that all Jewish tradition ascribes to angels an important place as assistants in the giving of the law. So in Josephus, *Ant.* xv. 5. 3; Herod says: 'We have learned what is most beautiful and what is most holy in our doctrines and laws from God through the medium of angels.' See also the book of Jubilees, written in the first century of our era. There is, however, one striking passage in the dying blessing of Moses, Deut. xxxiii. 2, which the great Jewish expositors and doctors, as the LXX., Onkelos, the writers of the Palestine Targum, etc., interpret as directly teaching the interposition of angels in the giving of the law. The accurate rendering of the passage in Deut. xxxiii. 2 is: 'He came from amidst myriads of holiness,' that is, from amidst countless angels who attend Him. The LXX. translation alters the sense of the whole passage. They assume the fact that in the giving of the law, *angels* were in attendance on the Eternal. Onkelos in his Targum (written first century of our era) thus paraphrases the words in Deut. xxxiii.: 'With Him were *ten thousand saints*.' The Palestine Targum in its present form, dating from the seventh century, but based on older materials, reads in the same place in Deuteronomy: 'With Him *ten thousand times ten thousand holy angels*.' The well-known statement of Ps. lxxviii. 17: 'The chariots of God are twice ten thousand, are thousands upon thousands: the Lord among them hath come from Sinai, into His sanctuary';

and possibly Num. x. 36: 'Return, O Jehovah, with the myriads of the thousands of Israel' (Perowne's translation), teach the same truth that angels, as ministers of the Eternal, assisted in the first solemn giving of the law in the desert wanderings; while St. Paul in his Epistle to the Galatian church (iii. 19), and the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews (ii. 2), tell us that this Jewish belief which Stephen quotes here, passed without question into the teaching of followers of Jesus.

Ver. 54. **And they gnashed on him with their teeth.** Bitterly as the Sanhedrim felt the sting of Stephen's reproachful words, as yet they had not proceeded to open violence; this was not used until the open adoration of the Crucified, occasioned by the vision of glory (related in vers. 55, 56), moved them to an irrepressible fury, and charging him now with public blasphemy they hurried him to execution. The expression 'to gnash with the teeth' is frequently used in the Old Testament to signify furious rage; see Job xvi. 9; Ps. xxxv. 16, xxxvii. 12.

Ver. 55. **And saw the glory of God, and Jesus.** 'The scene before his eyes was no longer the council hall at Jerusalem, and the circle of his infuriated judges; but he gazed up into the endless courts of the celestial Jerusalem, with its innumerable company of angels, and saw Jesus, in whose righteous cause he was about to die' (Conybeare and Howson, *St. Paul*).

This vision of the splendour of the glory of the Shekinah, Stephen might have beheld as he gazed through the window of the judgment hall,—shining through the deep blue arch of sky which overhung Jerusalem; but though it is possible the material heavens may be referred to here in the words 'looked stedfastly up into heaven,' yet as the vision was supernatural, and to him for a brief space the heaven of heavens was opened, and his eyes saw clearly into its glorious courts, it is by no means necessary to assume that he was gazing into the open sky at all. Many rationalistic attempts have been made to explain away this vision of Stephen, by suggesting it was a bright luminous cloud, or a thunderstorm accompanied by vivid lightning; but such attempts have all signally failed, and only contradict the plain text.

Ver. 56. **The Son of man.** This Messianic name, which first appears in the vision of Daniel (vii. 13), was a title which Christ often gave to Himself when on earth, but which was never applied to Him after His resurrection by any of the apostles or evangelists, except by Stephen here (Rev. i. 13, xiv. 14, where the designation again occurs, are both merely the recital of visions in heaven); and in this place the martyr repeats the words which many of those present must have well remembered were uttered by His Master before the same council: 'Jesus saith unto him' (the high priest), 'Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven' (Matt. xxvi. 64).

**Standing on the right hand of God.** Why standing? The Lord is always described as *sitting*—in his own words (Matt. xxvi.) just quoted; by evangelists (Mark xvi. 19), 'He was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God'; by apostles, as St. Paul (Eph. i. 20); by Old Testament writers, as David writing of King Messiah (Ps. cx. 1), 'The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand' (see Pearson, *On the*

*Glorious Session of Christ*; art. vi. of the Creed). Chrysostom's beautiful thought best answers this question, why Stephen saw Jesus *standing* and *not sitting* at the right hand of God: 'He had risen from the throne to succour His persecuted servant, and to receive him to Himself.' Usually our Lord is described as the Judge of quick and dead, and then as a Judge *He sits* enthroned at the right hand of the Father; but here our Lord appears in glory, not now *sitting* as Judge, but *standing* ready to assist, ready to plead for, ready to receive His faithful martyr.

Ver. 57. **Then they cried out with a loud voice.** When they heard Stephen in his awful joy saying that he beheld 'the Crucified' encircled with the visible glory, thus boldly confessing that the Shekinah belonged to Jesus of Nazareth, they could contain themselves no longer; the purport of their cries no doubt was identical with the memorable expression of the high priest, recorded by St. Matthew (xxvi. 65, 66), who, when Jesus claimed as belonging to Him the Majesty of heaven, 'rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death.'

Ver. 58. **And cast him out of the city.** By the law of Moses (Lev. xxiv. 14-16), these executions were to take place *outside the camp*. When the people had settled in the land of Canaan, each walled town was considered as representing the camp. For an example of this custom, see the account of the stoning of Naboth (1 Kings xxi. 13).

**And stoned him.** The Talmudists mention four different modes of death awarded by the court of justice—stoning, burning, slaying with the sword, strangulation. Of these, the first was deemed the most severe, and was the punishment of blasphemy. The way in which it was carried out was as follows:—The culprit, pinioned and stripped of his clothes, ascended a scaffold erected (outside the city) twice the height of a man, whence one of the witnesses pushed him down, so that he fell with his face to the ground. If death ensued, there was no occasion for stoning; but if in the accused there still remained life, then the other witness flung a very large stone at his chest, and if after this the culprit was still not dead, the people pelted him with stones till life was extinct, thus conforming to the command in Deut. xvii. 7.

**At a young man's feet, whose name was Saul.**

This is the first time the famous Paul of Tarsus appears mixed up with the affairs of the Church of Christ. It was as the bitterest enemy of the new sect we first hear of him. As a prominent member, no doubt, of the Cilician synagogue (Acts vi. 9) in its disputations with Stephen, he had become acquainted with much of the teaching of the leading followers of Jesus, and, in common with other leaders of the Jewish schools of thought, was persuaded these new doctrines were most hostile to the ceremonial traditions and superstitious ritual taught and practised among the people. Hence his conduct in the martyrdom of Stephen. For a detailed account of the training and early associations of this great man, see chapter ii. of Conybeare and Howson's *St. Paul*.

He is, in this passage, styled 'a young man.' This, however, must be understood with some reservation. Chrysostom states that at this period Paul was thirty-five years old, and this age is quite in accordance with the common way of speaking of 'a young man' (*juvenis*). Gloag quotes Varro



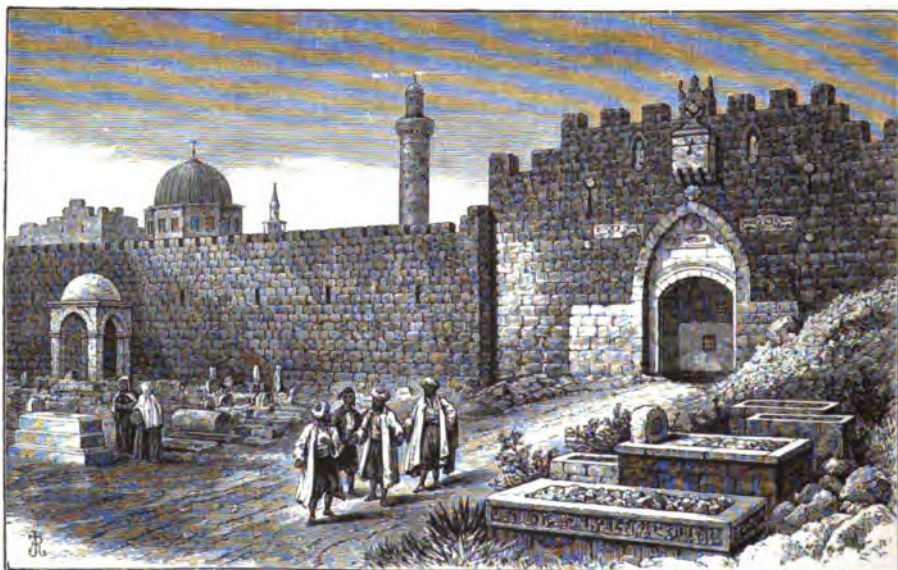
as calling a man 'young' till the age of forty-five, and Dio Cassius speaking of Cæsar as 'a young man' when about forty. Shortly after this time we find the Sanhedrim employing Saul as their chief agent in an important mission to Damascus. Such a work would scarcely have been entrusted to one still a young man in the ordinary acceptation of the word. Whether he was one of the Sanhedrim judges at this time is doubtful, but that he was elected a member soon after is sometimes inferred from Acts xxvi. 10.

Ver. 59. **And they stoned Stephen.** Twice the writer of the 'Acts' tells us this,—a remarkable repetition in a history usually so sparing in its details. It would seem to point (as perhaps also does the tense of the Greek verb used here) to a somewhat lengthened duration of the agony. No mortal injury was probably inflicted for a time; so they kept on stoning the martyr, who in the cruel storm was all the while

**Calling upon GOD.** In the original we have

simply *ἐκκαλέωμαι*, *invoking* or *calling upon*. The word to be supplied is evidently 'the Lord,' from the next clause, 'Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.' This is better than supplying 'God,' as in the English Version, which slightly confuses the reader. Stephen here prays with his latest breath to Jesus, and all attempts to explain this momentous fact away are utterly useless. This is allowed now by the best critics of the various schools,—De Wette, Meyer, Ewald, Lange, Alford, Gloag, etc.

The martyr's last cry was a prayer to our Lord, moulded upon two of the seven sayings of the Redeemer on the cross. But while the dying prayer of Jesus was addressed to His Father, Stephen, in his supreme agony, turns to Jesus; and to Jesus as King of the world of spirits, he commends his parting soul, to Jesus as Lord of all he prays for pardon on his murderers. Commenting on this primitive instance of prayer being offered to the Crucified, Canon Liddon well says, 'Dying men



St. Stephen's Gate.

do not cling to devotional fancies or to precarious opinions: the soul in its last agony instinctively falls back upon its deepest certainties' (*Divinity of Christ*, Lecture vii.). St. Augustine points to the striking fulfilment of Stephen's prayer for his enemies, in the conversion of one of the chiefest of them: 'If Stephen had not prayed, never would the Church have possessed Paul.'

Ver. 60. **And he kneeled down.** Some would explain these words as though this kneeling posture was caused by the stones falling thickly around and upon him; so the writer in the well-known *Dict. of the Bible* (Dr. Smith's): 'As the first volley of stones burst upon him, he called upon the Master. . . . Another crash of stones brought him upon his knees.' But it is more natural to assume that, after Stephen was thrown down from the scaffold (as described above), still living and conscious, he raised himself to his knees, that his last act might be a protest alike for his adoration of his Master and his forgiveness of his

enemies; and so kneeling, he breathed out his beautiful prayer.

And . . . **he fell asleep.** Heathen writers have used this word sometimes in this sense (as, for instance, Callimachus, Epigram 10), but the derivative, *κοιμητήριον*, *cemetery*, that is, a sleeping-place where the bodies were laid only to sleep till the resurrection should awaken them, is peculiarly a Christian term, and its introduction and general use is owing to the new ideas which the teaching of Jesus has persuaded men to associate with the grave (comp. 1 Thess. iv. 13).

Wordsworth has a singular but beautiful note on the word *κοιμήθη*, *he fell asleep*, with which the narrative, of which Stephen is the hero, is brought to a close: 'There is something musical in the cadence of this word, and also of the word which closes the Acts, *ἀκωλύτως*, *unhindered*, rendered in the English, "no man forbidding him." The word commences with a short syllable followed by three long ones, happily adapted to

express rest after labour, as may be seen in the lines of Catullus describing his return home :

"Cum mens onus reponit, ac peregrino  
Labore fessi venimus larem ad nostrum  
Desideratque acquiescimus lecto."

This cadence is expressive . . . of motion succeeded by rest, of action consummated and settled in repose . . . an emblem of the Church of Christ, and of the life of every true believer in Him.'

The question has often been raised, How came it that the Roman permission for this execution was not sought and obtained before the deed was done? The stoning of Stephen was hastily carried out, but it does not seem to have been by any means a mere tumultuary proceeding. The Nazarene heretic had been formally tried by the great council of the Sanhedrim, condemned, and then put to death, strictly in accordance with the principles of the Jewish law. On the other hand, it would appear from St. John xviii. 31, when the Redeemer was being tried, that the Jews had no power legally to put any man to death. The answer to this is supplied by the history of this particular period. The Procurator Pontius Pilate had just been or was on the point of being relieved of his office; his official superior, Lucius Vitellius, the governor (Legatus) of Syria, had resolved upon adopting a more conciliatory policy towards the Jewish nation. Pilate, whose stern rule in Judea had procured him many bitter enemies, was sacrificed to the new policy. The execution of Stephen and the bloody persecution of the followers of Jesus, which immediately followed it, seem to have taken place just when the Roman rule was relaxed in Jerusalem; and such high-handed proceedings on the part of the Jews as are related in this and the early part of the next chapter—the death of Stephen and the general persecution which followed—were connived at by the legate of Syria and his subordinate officers in Judea (see Renan, *Les Apôtres*, chap. viii.).

#### EXCURSUS.

##### ON CERTAIN ALLEGED DISCREPANCIES IN STEPHEN'S SPEECH.

A great deal has been written upon certain supposed inaccuracies which occur in the speech of Stephen, as given in the seventh chapter of the Acts. The case stands thus. In his rapid review of Old Testament history, some few statements occur which appear in certain details to vary from the account of the same circumstances contained in the Old Testament.

These differences are in themselves utterly unimportant, and in no case possess the slightest bearing on the current of the argument; for instance, one of the more notable of these supposed variations consists in the name of the burial-place of Jacob and his sons; another, in the number of years during which the Egyptian slavery lasted; another, the exact period of Abraham's life when his father Terah died. The best general explanation is, that whenever Stephen's account varies or seems to vary in these few little unimportant details from the Old Testament history, in these cases to assume that he follows the popularly-received national history of his time. Ewald goes a little further, and suggests there was at that time current among the Jews a generally-received epitome of national history, which no doubt Stephen quoted from. Meyer, commenting upon

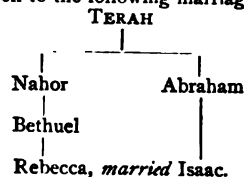
this suggestion, writes 'that such a supposition is possible, but that the existence of such a work is nowhere shown.' But the hypothesis of Ewald, or at all events the modification of it above suggested, is well supported by what we possess of contemporary Jewish literature. In several of the instances of Stephen's supposed errors, Philo or Josephus, when relating the same event, makes the same apparent mistake as Stephen, clearly showing that at that time there was a popular account, *written or unwritten*, of the history of Israel differing apparently in a few unimportant details from the Old Testament story.

Each of these alleged discrepancies will be found, however, briefly discussed in the following note.

Vers. 2, 3. The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Charran. And said unto him, Get thee out of thy country. According to the history in Gen. xi. 31, xii. 1-5, the call of Abraham took place in Haran [Charran]; while Stephen speaks of Abraham being called when he was in Mesopotamia, *before he dwelt in Charran*. There is no doubt, however, that Abraham was twice called by the Lord, once in Ur of the Chaldees in the north of Mesopotamia, and afterwards in Haran (see Gen. xv. 7 and Neh. ix. 7, in both of which passages the earlier Divine summons is alluded to).

Philo, who represents fairly the current tradition of the time, distinctly speaks of these two calls (see Philo, *de Abrahamis*, lxxvii. p. 77, 16, ed. Mang.).

Ver. 4. When his father was dead. This does not accord with the history in Genesis, where we read in Gen. xi. 26, Terah lived seventy years, and begat Abraham, Nahor, and Haran; and in Gen. xii. 4, Abraham came forth from Haran when seventy-five years old; and Stephen says at that period Terah was dead. Thus the days of Terah could not have exceeded 145 years. But in Gen. xi. 32, it is said the days of Terah were 205 years. The Samaritan Pentateuch reads in Gen. xi. 32 for Terah's age 145 years for 205, which would of course remove the difficulty. Philo, again, supports Stephen in his statement that Terah was dead when Abraham came forth from Haran (*De Migr. Abraham*, sect. 32). The singular alteration in the Samaritan Pentateuch was evidently made to suit the traditional history then, evidently from Philo's statement, current among the Jews. The apparent difficulty admits of a ready solution if we adopt the theory held by some Jewish writers, that Abraham was not the eldest, but the youngest son of Terah: the position Abraham occupied in the history of the chosen people would readily account for his being the first named of the sons of Terah. [Japheth, for instance, the eldest of the sons of Noah (Gen. ix. 24, x. 21), is mentioned (Gen. v. 32) last of them.] Thus Terah would be 70 years when Nahor, the eldest of the three, was born, and 60 years might well have elapsed in those days of long life before the birth of Abraham, the youngest. Wordsworth calls attention to the following marriage:—





Such a marriage would seem certainly to intimate that Abraham was a younger brother of Nahor.

Ver. 6. **That his seed should sojourn in a strange land; and that they should bring them into bondage, and entreat them evil four hundred years.** A chronological difficulty arises here, —400 years, a round number, is mentioned as the duration of the sojourning of the seed of Abraham in a strange land, here and in Gen. xv. 13. The *exact* number of years is given in Ex. xii. 40 as 430. Now, from what period are these years to be reckoned?

At first sight, the words, both in this place and in Ex. xii. 40, would seem to limit the period to the Egyptian bondage; but St. Paul, in Gal. iii. 17, evidently understands it differently, and considers the 430 years as the space of time intervening between the call of Abraham and the giving of the law. This is evidently the meaning. Wordsworth gives the following table of dates:—

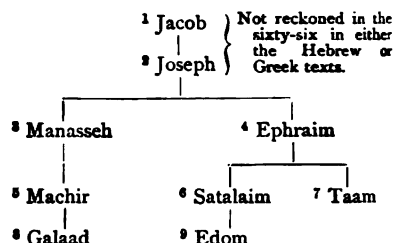
Abraham in Haran, . . .	5 years.
„ in Canaan, . . .	11 „
From the birth of Ishmael to that of Isaac, . . .	14 „
	<hr/> 30 years.
From the birth of Isaac to the birth of Jacob, . . .	60 years.
From the birth of Jacob to the birth of Joseph, . . .	90 „
To Joseph's death, . . .	110 „
To the birth of Moses, . . .	60 „
To the Exodus, . . .	80 „
	<hr/> 400 years.

On examination of both the passages (Ex. xii. 40 and that containing the words of Stephen under consideration), it will be seen that this period of 400 years is roughly given as the time during which the children of Israel were to continue *sojourners* or *strangers* in the land in which they might be dwelling. The patriarchs were not merely strangers in the land; they were often, as the Genesis history tells us, 'evil entreated.' Instances of such evil treatment, even in the case of Abraham, the greatest of them, seem to have been not unfrequent (see Gen. xii. and xx.). Jacob, too, tells Pharaoh, 'Few and evil have been his days.' But whatever view may be taken of this difficulty, Stephen, even if he intended (which at least, as we have shown, is doubtful) to represent the Egyptian bondage as lasting 400 years, adopted a chronology which was current apparently in some of the Jewish schools of that time; for Josephus, *Ant.* ii. 9. 1, distinctly states that the Israelites spent 400 years under the afflictions in Egypt. In another place the same writer follows the chronology of St. Paul in the Galatian Epistle (see *Ant.* ii. 15. 2). It would seem as though there were two traditions current at that time in the Jewish schools relative to the time spent by the children of Israel in Egypt.

Ver. 14. **Then sent Joseph, and called his father Jacob to him, and all his kindred, three-score and fifteen souls.** According to the Hebrew text of Gen. xlvii. 27, Ex. i. 5, Deut. x. 22, the descendants of Jacob at this time amounted to seventy persons; but the Greek version of the LXX. has changed that number in the first two passages to seventy-five, which agrees exactly with

the statement in this verse. In the Hebrew text of Gen. xlvii. 27, the family of Jacob which came into Egypt numbered sixty-six, and Jacob himself, Joseph and his two sons, make up the full number seventy.

In the LXX., in verse 27 of this same chapter of Genesis, we find the following interpolation: 'And the sons of Joseph born to him in the land of Egypt were nine souls.' Thus the LXX. makes up the number  $66 + 9 = 75$ . Philo notices this difference between the Hebrew and Greek texts of the Pentateuch, and deduces from it, after his custom, an allegory (see Meyer here). This, however, cannot with any fairness be termed a discrepancy, for Stephen simply follows the Greek version of the LXX., to which as a Hellenist he was most accustomed. Nor have we any right to condemn the interpolation of the LXX. as an error; it in no way contradicts the numbers given in the Hebrew text, but simply adds to them certain numbers of Joseph's family not reckoned in the original census. Wordsworth mentions who these nine most probably were—



'The addition of these five was not accidental, for Stephen (following the LXX.) thus affirms that those born of Jacob's line in Egypt, the strange land and house of bondage, were equally children of the promise with those born in Canaan, the Promised Land, according to what Jacob himself says of the sons of Joseph born in Egypt, "As Reuben and Simeon they (Ephraim and Manasseh) shall be mine."'

Vers. 15, 16. **So Jacob went down into Egypt, and died, he, and our fathers, And were carried over into Sychem, and laid in the sepulchre, etc.** We read in Gen. i. 13 that Jacob was buried in Abraham's sepulchre at Hebron, in the cave of the field of Machpelah; and in Josh. xxiv. 32, that the bones of Joseph brought up by the children of Israel out of Egypt, were buried in Shechem. The Old Testament is silent concerning the places of sepulture of the other eleven sons of Jacob. In this verse nothing is said of Jacob's burying-place, for the translation of the passage should run thus: '15. So Jacob went down into Egypt and died, he and our fathers. 16. And they were carried over into Sychem (*οἱ πατέρες αὐτῶν* being taken as the subject of *μεταβιβάσθαι* without *αὐτοῖς*). Of Sychem as the burial-place of the eleven brethren of Joseph, St. Jerome, who lived near Sychem, says that the tombs of the twelve patriarchs were to be seen there in his time (see Ep. 86, and also his treatise, *De optimo genere interpretandi*), where he expressly states that the twelve patriarchs were not buried in Asbes (Hebron), but in Sychem. This burial of the twelve great ancestors of the tribes of Israel in hated Samaritan Shechem was mentioned by Stephen, to show that holiness and blessedness are not limited in death and burial

to any particular spot. The bodies of these patriarchs were brought from distant Egypt and laid there as in a chosen spot in preference to holy Hebron and the cave of Machpelah, where Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob had been laid (see Wordsworth's note here).

In the sepulchre that Abraham bought for a sum of money from the sons of Emmor, the father of Shechem. Some commentators have supposed, but needlessly, that in haste or inadvertence Stephen has here substituted the name of Abraham for that of Jacob. In Stephen's speech we read how '*Abraham bought a sepulchre of the sons of Emmor.*' In Gen. xxxiii. 19 we read how '*Jacob bought a piece of ground from the sons of Emmor.*' Now was Stephen (or his transcriber) mistaken here? Did he through 'inadvertence' mention the name of Abraham instead of that of Jacob? The question really is, Did Abraham buy a piece of land at Shechem? *Directly* this is not stated in Genesis, but we find from Gen. xii. 6, 7 that it was in *Shechem* that God first appeared to him, and that *there* he built an altar to the Lord; at that time we are expressly told 'the Canaanite was then in the land.' Now it is certainly more than probable that Abraham purchased the site on which he erected the altar, and where God first appeared to him, just as we read later, when his grandson Jacob erected an altar also in *Shechem*, he bought the site from the princes of the land. Whether or not the field purchased by Jacob was the same as that originally acquired by Abraham is doubtful (Wordsworth, whose argument generally is here followed, supposes it was, and that in the intervening years the sacred spot had been occupied by others, and Jacob from a feeling of piety wished to restore it).

Certain it is, from the story of Genesis, that both Abraham and Jacob built an altar to the Lord in Shechem, and the latter, we are told, bought the site from the princes of the country. That the former should have omitted to secure as far as possible so sacred a site, is most improbable. Stephen asserts that he did so, thereby contradicting no previous statement, but adding, doubtless from some well-known tradition, an additional fact in itself by no means improbable. The fact of the names of the persons, '*sons of Emmor*,' from whom Stephen relates that Abraham bought the sepulchre, being identical with the names of those from whom Jacob bought the field, is adduced as a proof that the two transactions are identical, and that Stephen has substituted Abraham for Jacob. But, as Wordsworth well suggests, there is nothing strange in the fact of there being more than one prince in Shechem bearing the same name 'Emmor.' The 'Emmor' mentioned by Stephen need not have been the same as the 'Emmor' or Hamor from whose sons Jacob bought the field. Indeed, some five hundred years later we find (Judg. ix. 28) the same name meeting us, and again connected with Shechem: 'Serve the men of Hamor (Emmor) the father of Shechem: for why should we serve him?' Wordsworth believes the name Emmor (Hamor) to have been the hereditary title of the kings of the country, as Pharaoh was in Egypt, Cæsar in Rome, and probably Candace in Ethiopia; but apart from such a hypothesis, which is doubtful, how commonly in royal dynasties does the same name occur and recur! We need only instance in old days Darius in Persia, Antiochus in Syria, Herod in Palestine, and in modern times Louis and Philippe in France, Henry and George in England.

## CHAPTER VIII.

*The Church of Christ in Judea and Samaria—The Preaching of Christianity to the Gentiles—General Persecution of Saul—The Acts of Philip the Deacon—His Preaching in Samaria—The Apostles Peter and John take part in the Samaritan Mission—Philip baptizes the Ethiopian Eunuch.*

- 1 **A**ND <sup>a</sup> Saul was <sup>b</sup> consenting unto his death. And at that time there was <sup>1</sup> a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem; and <sup>c</sup> they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and <sup>d</sup> Samaria, except 2 the apostles. And <sup>e</sup> devout men <sup>f</sup> carried Stephen *to his burial*, 3 and <sup>g</sup> made great lamentation over him. As for Saul, <sup>h</sup> he made havock of the church, entering into every house, and <sup>i</sup> haling 4 men and women, committed *them* to prison. Therefore <sup>k</sup> they that were scattered abroad went every where <sup>l</sup> preaching the word.

<sup>i</sup> Lu. xii. 58 (Eng.). Cp. Jas. ii. 6.

<sup>k</sup> Ch. xi. 19. So ver. 1. See Mat. x. 23.

<sup>a</sup> Ch. vii. 58.  
<sup>b</sup> Ch. xxii. 20.  
<sup>c</sup> Ch. xi. 19.  
<sup>d</sup> See 1 Kings xvi. 24; ch. i. 8.  
<sup>e</sup> Lu. ii. 25; ch. iii. 5.  
<sup>f</sup> So ch. v. 6? Cp. Job v. 26 (Gr.).  
<sup>g</sup> So Gen. xxiii. 2, 1. 10; 2 Sam. iii. 31.  
<sup>h</sup> So ch. ix. 1, 13, 21, xxii. 4, 19, xxvi. 9-11; 1 Cor. xv. 9; Gal. i. 13; Phil. iii. 6; 1 Tim. i. 13.

<sup>1</sup> And there arose on that day

<sup>2</sup> went about

5 Then <sup>l</sup> Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached <sup>l</sup> Ver. 26. Ch  
6 Christ unto them. <sup>m</sup> And the people with one accord gave <sup>m</sup> Cp. Jo. iv. 28.  
heed unto those *things* which Philip spake, hearing and seeing  
7 the miracles which he did. For <sup>n</sup> unclean spirits, <sup>o</sup> crying with  
loud voice, came out of many that were possessed *with them*: <sup>n</sup> So Mk. xvi.  
and many taken with palsies, and *that were* lame, were healed. <sup>o</sup> So Mat. viii.  
8,9 And there was <sup>p</sup> great joy in that city. But there was a certain <sup>p</sup> Mk. i. 26,  
man, called Simon, which beforetime in the *same* city <sup>q</sup> used <sup>q</sup> Lu. iv. 41,  
sorcery, and <sup>r</sup> bewitched the people of Samaria, <sup>r</sup> giving out <sup>r</sup> So Ver. 39.  
10 that himself was some great one: To whom they all gave heed, <sup>r</sup> See Jo. xvi.  
<sup>s</sup> from the least to the greatest, saying, <sup>s</sup> This *man* is the great <sup>s</sup> So ver. 11;  
11 power of God.<sup>4</sup> And to him they <sup>t</sup> had regard,<sup>5</sup> because that <sup>t</sup> ch. xiii. 6.  
12 of long time *he* had <sup>u</sup> bewitched them with <sup>u</sup> sorceries. But <sup>u</sup> Cp. Mal. iii. 5.  
when they believed Philip preaching <sup>v</sup> the *things* concerning <sup>v</sup> Vers. 11, 13  
the kingdom of God,<sup>6</sup> and the name of Jesus Christ, they were <sup>v</sup> (Gk.), Cp.  
13 baptized, both men and women. Then Simon himself believed <sup>w</sup> Mk. iii. 21;  
also: and when he was baptized, he <sup>x</sup> continued with Philip, <sup>w</sup> Gal. iii. 1.  
and <sup>y</sup> wondered, beholding *the* miracles and signs *which were* <sup>x</sup> See ch. v. 36.  
done. <sup>y</sup> So ch. xxvi.  
<sup>z</sup> See Jer.  
<sup>z</sup> vi. 13.  
<sup>z</sup> So ch. xiv.  
<sup>z</sup> i. xxviii. 6.  
<sup>z</sup> v. Vers. 6, 10  
<sup>z</sup> (Gk.).  
<sup>z</sup> See ch. i. 3.  
<sup>z</sup> Ch. x. 7 (Gk.).

14 Now when <sup>1</sup> the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that <sup>1</sup> Ver. 1.  
Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them <sup>1</sup> Lu. xxii. 8;  
15 <sup>2</sup> Peter and John: Who, when they were come down, prayed for <sup>2</sup> ch. iii. 1, etc.,  
16 them, <sup>3</sup> that they might receive the Holy Ghost: (For <sup>3</sup> as yet <sup>3</sup> iv. 13, 19.  
he was fallen upon none of them: only <sup>4</sup> they were baptized in <sup>4</sup> Ch. ii. 38;  
17 the name of the Lord Jesus.)<sup>7</sup> Then <sup>5</sup> laid they *their* hands on <sup>5</sup> vers. 15, 18.  
18 them, and <sup>6</sup> they received the Holy Ghost. And when Simon <sup>6</sup> Cp. ch. xix. 2.  
saw that through laying on <sup>7</sup> of the apostles' hands <sup>7</sup> the Holy <sup>7</sup> Ch. ii. 38.  
19 Ghost was given, he offered them money, Saying, Give me also <sup>8</sup> xix. 5 So  
this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the <sup>8</sup> ch. x. 48.  
20 Holy Ghost. But Peter said unto him, <sup>9</sup> Thy money <sup>9</sup> perish with <sup>9</sup> See Mat.  
21 purchased <sup>10</sup> with money. Thou hast neither <sup>10</sup> part nor lot in <sup>10</sup> xxviii. 19  
this matter:<sup>11</sup> for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. <sup>11</sup> Ch. xix. 6;  
22 Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God,<sup>12</sup> <sup>12</sup> Heb. vi. 2.  
23 perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee. For <sup>13</sup> Cp. ch. vi. 6.  
I perceive that thou art in <sup>14</sup> the gall of bitterness, and <sup>14</sup> in <sup>14</sup> the <sup>13</sup> Vers. 15, 18.  
24 bond of iniquity.<sup>13</sup> Then answered Simon, and said, <sup>15</sup> Pray ye <sup>15</sup> Cp. 2 Kings  
<sup>16</sup> v. 16; Dan.  
<sup>16</sup> v. 16, 17.  
<sup>16</sup> Cp. Mat. x. 8.  
<sup>16</sup> See ch. ii. 38.  
<sup>16</sup> Deut. x. 9.  
<sup>16</sup> xii. 12, xiv.  
<sup>16</sup> 27, 29, xviii.  
<sup>16</sup> in Heb. and  
Gk. So Col.  
i. 12.  
<sup>16</sup> So Dan. iv. 27;  
<sup>16</sup> 2 Tim. ii. 25.  
<sup>16</sup> See Deut.  
xxix. 18.  
<sup>16</sup> Cp. Mat.  
xxvii. 34.  
<sup>16</sup> Isa. lii. 6  
(Heb. & Gk.)  
<sup>16</sup> So Ex. viii.  
8, 28, ix. 28,  
x. 17. See  
Jas. v. 16.

<sup>3</sup> According to the reading of the older authorities, the words would run, 'for many of them who had unclean spirits, crying with a loud voice, came out.'  
<sup>4</sup> According to the more ancient authorities, 'The power of God that is called great.'

<sup>5</sup> And they gave heed to him  
<sup>6</sup> preaching glad tidings concerning the kingdom of God  
<sup>7</sup> baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus <sup>8</sup> through the laying on  
<sup>9</sup> literally, 'Thy silver.' <sup>10</sup> thou thoughtest to purchase the gift of God  
<sup>11</sup> in this word <sup>12</sup> According to the older authorities, 'and pray the Lord.'  
<sup>13</sup> Some would translate here, 'I perceive that thou wilt yet fall into the gall  
of bitterness, and into the bond of iniquity.'



*From photographs.*

**SAMARIA.**



- to the Lord for me, that none of *these things* which ye have  
 25 spoken come upon me. And they, when they had <sup>o</sup> testified and preached the word of the Lord, returned to Jerusalem, and  
<sup>a</sup> preached the gospel in many villages of the Samaritans.  
 26 And <sup>q</sup> the angel <sup>14</sup> of the Lord spake unto <sup>r</sup> Philip, saying,  
 Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down  
 27 from Jerusalem unto Gaza, <sup>s</sup> which is desert. <sup>15</sup> And he arose  
 and went: and behold, <sup>t</sup> a man of Ethiopia, <sup>u</sup> an eunuch <sup>v</sup> of  
 great authority under Candace queen of the <sup>w</sup> Ethiopians, who  
 had <sup>x</sup> the charge of all her treasure, and <sup>y</sup> had come to Jerusalem  
 28 for to worship, Was returning, and sitting in his chariot read  
 29 Esaias <sup>16</sup> the prophet. Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go  
 30 near, and join thyself to this chariot. And Philip ran *thither* <sup>17</sup>  
 to *him*, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, <sup>18</sup> and said,  
 31 <sup>a</sup> Understandest thou <sup>19</sup> what thou readest? And he said,  
<sup>a</sup> How can I, except some *man* <sup>20</sup> should <sup>b</sup> guide me? And <sup>c</sup> he  
 32 desired Philip that *he* would come up and sit with him. The  
 place of the scripture which he read <sup>21</sup> was this, <sup>d</sup> He was led  
 as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb <sup>22</sup> before his  
 33 shearer, so opened he not <sup>23</sup> his mouth: In his humiliation his  
 judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his genera-  
 34 tion? for his life is taken from the earth. And the eunuch  
 answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the  
 35 prophet this? of himself, or of some *other man*? <sup>24</sup> Then Philip  
<sup>e</sup> opened his mouth, and <sup>f</sup> began at the same <sup>g</sup> scripture, <sup>25</sup> and  
 36 <sup>h</sup> preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on *their way*,  
 they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, <sup>26</sup> See,  
 37 *here is water*; what doth <sup>i</sup> hinder me to be baptized? And  
 Philip said, <sup>h</sup> If thou believest with all *thine heart*, *thou* mayest.  
 And he answered and said, I believe that <sup>j</sup> Jesus Christ is <sup>m</sup> the  
 38 Son of God. <sup>27</sup> And he commanded the chariot to stand still:  
 and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the  
 39 eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up  
 out of the water, <sup>n</sup> the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip,  
 that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went *on his way* <sup>28</sup>  
 40 <sup>o</sup> rejoicing. But Philip was found at <sup>p</sup> Azotus: and passing  
 through, he <sup>q</sup> preached in all the cities, <sup>29</sup> till he came to <sup>r</sup> Cesarea.

<sup>14</sup> But an angel

<sup>16</sup> and he was reading the prophet Isaiah

<sup>18</sup> reading Isaiah the prophet

<sup>20</sup> some one <sup>21</sup> which he was reading

<sup>23</sup> so he openeth not

<sup>25</sup> from this scripture

<sup>27</sup> *The whole of this verse is wanting in nearly all the older authorities.*

<sup>29</sup> for he went on his way

<sup>29</sup> *or, better, 'he preached the gospel to all the cities.'*

<sup>15</sup> *or, 'the same is desert.'*

<sup>17</sup> *omit 'thither.'*

<sup>19</sup> Understandest thou then

<sup>22</sup> is dumb

<sup>24</sup> *omit 'man.'*

<sup>26</sup> and the eunuch saith

<sup>o</sup> See Lu. xvi. 28.

<sup>p</sup> Ver. 40 (Gk.).  
See ch. i. 8.

<sup>q</sup> Cp. Jo. iv. 38;  
ch. ix. 32.

<sup>r</sup> See ch. xii. 7.  
Ver. 5, etc.

<sup>s</sup> Cp. Zeph. ii. 4.

<sup>t</sup> See Zeph. iii. 10.  
Cp. Jer. xxxviii. 7.

<sup>u</sup> See Gen. xxxvii. 36.

<sup>v</sup> See Lu. i. 52.  
See 2 Kings xix. 9.

<sup>w</sup> Ezra vii. 21  
(Chaldee).

<sup>x</sup> 1 Kings viii. 41, 42; Jo. xii. 20. So

ch. xxiv. 11.

<sup>y</sup> 2 Cor. iii. 2 (Gk.).

<sup>a</sup> See Rom. x. 14.

<sup>b</sup> John xvi. 13.  
c 1 Kings xx. 33; 2 Kings x. 15.

<sup>d</sup> Cited from Isa. liii. 7, 8.

<sup>e</sup> See Mat. v. 2.  
f Lu. xxiv. 27.

<sup>g</sup> So ch. xvii. 2, 3, xviii. 28.

<sup>h</sup> See ch. v. 42.  
i See ch. x. 47

<sup>j</sup> Mk. xvi. 16.

<sup>k</sup> Mat. i. 18.

<sup>m</sup> Jo. ix. 35, 38.  
See Mat. xiv. 33.

<sup>n</sup> See 1 Kings xviii. 22.

<sup>o</sup> Ver. 8.  
p See 1 Sam. vi. 1.

<sup>q</sup> Ver. 25 (Gk.).  
r Ch. ix. 30, x. 1, 24, xi. 17, xii. 19, xviii. 22, xxi. 8, 16, xxiii. 23, 33, xxv. 1, 4, 6, 13.

*General Persecution of the Church by Saul, 1-4.*

Ver. 1. **And Saul was consenting unto his death.** These words were no doubt often heard by Luke from the Paul of later days, for we find them repeated by the missionary apostle himself years after (Acts xxii. 20). They serve here to introduce the narrative of the persecution of the Christians which arose after the death of Stephen.

**At that time.** The literal translation of the Greek words is the best: 'On that day,' for it sets before us a clearer picture of what then took place. Returning from the scene of blood, Saul, armed with the authority of the jealous Sanhedrim, at once commenced his savage work, and in a very short time the little flourishing Church of Jerusalem was dispersed.

**They were all scattered abroad.** This expression should not be understood literally; but as many of the great body of Christians, amounting at this time to some thousands, obliged by the violence of the persecution to leave the city, betook themselves to a distance, we can well imagine that the various congregations for a time were dispersed, and also that the elaborate organization of charity alluded to in chap. ii. 44, 45, iii. 34, 35, and especially in vi. 1-3, was broken up. This partial dispersion of the new sect, this breaking up of their organization, is roughly designated by the words, 'they were all scattered abroad.'

**Except the apostles.** But while many left the city, the apostles remained: it is not impossible that the veneration with which the people had now long regarded these teachers, who had worked so many and such beneficent works in their midst, preserved them from violence. But whether or no they were exposed to danger, they felt they had no right to quit the holy city, which they regarded as their post of duty. There is an old tradition contained in the apocryphal 'Preaching of Peter,' that our Lord once said to the apostles, 'If any one of Israel wishes to repent, and through My name to believe in God, his sins shall be forgiven him. After twelve years, go ye forth into the world, lest any one say, We have not heard.' See also Eusebius, *H. E.* v. 18.

Ver. 2. **And devout men.** In spite of the terror caused by the execution of Stephen, and the persecution which immediately followed, some pious Jews—for this is probably what is meant by the term 'devout men'—were found reverently to bury the martyr's disfigured body: these, though not professedly followers of Jesus, still as inquirers, had listened with admiration to the brave and eloquent deacon.

**Made great lamentation over him.** Chrysostom remarks that Stephen's own dying words were his noblest funeral oration: 'Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.' There is a curious legend repeated by Baronius, that Gamaliel, as a secret Christian, gave the body of the martyred Stephen sepulture in his own villa garden, and that subsequently he was buried in the same tomb.

Ver. 3. **As for Saul, he made havock of the church.** We gather some notion respecting the extreme severity of this first persecution, from casual expressions in the Acts, and from the epistles of him who, during these terrible days, acted as chief inquisitor: 'Thinking that he ought to do many things contrary to the name of

Jesus of Nazareth . . . in Jerusalem . . . he shut up many of the saints in prison' (Acts xxvi. 9, 10). And not only did men thus suffer at his hands, but women also, a fact three times repeated as great aggravation of his cruelty (Acts viii. 3, ix. 2, xxii. 4). These persecuted people were scourged—'often' scourged—in many synagogues (Acts xxvi. 10). Nor was Stephen the only one who suffered death, as we may learn from the Apostle Paul's own confession (Acts xxii. 4, xxvi. 10). Every possible effort he used to make them blaspheme that holy Name whereby they were called (Acts xxvi. 11; Gal. i. 23). His fame as an inquisitor was notorious far and wide; even in Damascus, Ananias had heard how much evil he had done to the saints of Christ at Jerusalem. He was known there 'as he that destroyed them which called on this name in Jerusalem' (Acts ix. 13-21. See, too, Gal. i. 13; Phil. iii. 6; 1 Tim. i. 13; 1 Cor. xv. 9).

Ver. 4. **Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word.** The immediate result of this bitter persecution was the fulfilment of the first part of the Saviour's words: 'Ye shall be witnesses unto Me both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and in Samaria.' Tertullian's famous saying, 'The blood of the martyrs is the seed of Christians,' is first exemplified in the conduct of these earliest missionaries, in the days that followed the death of Stephen. Persecution and trouble only served to make them more earnest in their Master's cause. Wherever they went, they proclaimed the faith, and the joyful tidings concerning the Redeemer and His work. Some of the 'dispersed' carried the message as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch (Acts xi. 19). Some probably travelled even to Rome and Italy, for Rom. xvi. 7 makes mention of Andronicus and Junia, who were also in Christ before Paul's own conversion.

As a specimen of the work done by these persecuted banished ones, the writer of the 'Acts' gives us in detail, an account of the proceedings of one of the more distinguished of them,—Philip the deacon, known as the evangelist.

*The Acts of Philip the Deacon.—Philip preaches in Samaria, vers. 5-13.*

Ver. 5. **Then Philip.** This famous missionary is the second named in the list of the seven deacons (Acts vi. 5), Stephen being the first. It may easily be assumed that the persecution would be especially directed against the distinguished colleagues of the martyred Stephen; and these seven seem, as we have noticed above, from the time of their official appointment, to have taken a very prominent position in the Church at Jerusalem. Philip is called the evangelist (Acts xxi. 8), where he is also mentioned as being married, and having four daughters—virgins who prophesied. The title of evangelist, by which he is commonly known in ecclesiastical history, is owing partly to the fact that he was the first who, outside the holy city, proclaimed the Evangel, good news of Christ.

**Went down to the city of Samaria.** Philip appears at once to have gone down to this old city, once the capital of the kingdom. Built originally by King Omri, father of Ahab, it remained the chief city of Israel while that kingdom endured. In B.C. 719, Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, took it after a two years' siege, and razed it to the ground.



It never regained anything of its old importance until the days of Herod the Great, who restored it to its ancient splendour, changing its name to Sebaste, the Greek equivalent of Augusta, in honour of Cæsar Augustus; the new city was, however, still often called by its old name Samaria (Josephus, *Ant.* xx. 6. 2).

**Ver. 6. And the people with one accord gave heed.** The visit and the work of Christ in the neighbouring city of Sychar (St. John iv.) help us to understand the warm welcome which Philip received among these Samaritans.

**Ver. 7. Crying with loud voice.** Not with indignation, because they were forced to abandon their unhappy victims, but testifying to the Messiahship of Jesus, whose almighty Name they were compelled to obey. The expressions used in this account of the healing of demoniacs evidently supposes the reader to be acquainted with such cases in the history of Christ. St. Luke, the presumed writer, or at least reviser of the 'Acts,' in this book never employs the term *δαίμονια, demons*, in speaking of the 'possessed,' although in his Gospel he employs it oftener than any of the evangelists; and from this Bengel infers that the power of possession was feebler after the death of Christ.

**Ver. 9. A certain man, called Simon, which beforetime in the same city used sorcery.** We have here a description of the first collision between the unreality and imposture in the outside world, and the earnestness and single-heartedness of the little community who loved the name of Jesus. The person called Simon, commonly known as Simon Magus, or the magician, was not an uncommon figure in the history of this period. Such a one we meet with again in Elymas at the court of the Roman governor, Sergius Paulus (Acts xiii.). Such a one was the famous impostor Apollonius of Tyana, who flourished in the same century. An advanced knowledge of natural philosophy, especially of chemistry, gave these clever unscrupulous characters a strange power and influence over men's minds, an influence they constantly used to further their own selfish ends. Simon seems to have been really impressed with the miracles performed by Philip, and at once perceived that these wonder-works were of a very different order from those which his superior knowledge of natural science enabled him to perform. He never seems to have comprehended the source whence proceeded Philip's awful power. He attributed it simply to a deeper knowledge of the secrets of nature, and thought the key to the art was, of course, to be bought. His mistake and discomfiture are related in the following verses. Bitterly annoyed at the result of his collision with the followers of Jesus, it is probable that this unhappy man at once turned his great powers [for these undoubtedly he possessed in no mean degree] to oppose the growing influence of the little Church. His evil work was crowned with no small measure of success, for in the records of the early history of Christianity, among the many false teachers who sprang up, Simon Magus is invested with a mysterious importance, 'as the great Heresiarch, the open enemy of the apostles, inspired, it would seem, by the spirit of evil, to countermine the work of the Saviour, and to found a school of error in opposition to the Church of God.' In the treatise, *Against Heresies*, a work now generally ascribed to Hippolytus, bishop of

Portus, near Rome, about A.D. 218-235, we find a general outline of the principles of Simon Magus and his school. Some account also is given in the same treatise of the *Great Announcement* (*ἀρχαὶα μαγία*), a writing compiled from the oral teaching of Simon, by one of his immediate followers: in this compilation the revelation with which he declared he was entrusted is set forth, and the work and Person of Christ are disparaged and set aside. See Westcott, *On the Canon*, chap. iv., and Ewald, *Acten Geschichte*, pp. 120, 122. Simon is by many regarded as the father of Gnosticism.

**Giving out that himself was some great one.** According to Justin Martyr, Simon pretended that he was God, above all principality and power. Jerome relates that he said, 'I am the Son of God,' 'the Paraclete,' 'the Almighty,' etc. Such bold assertions as these related by Justin Martyr and Jerome were no doubt made subsequently to his collision with Peter and Philip. Exasperated by his repulse, and the exposure he had suffered at the hands of these believers in Christ, envious too of their powers and also of the consideration which they enjoyed with so many of the people, he endeavoured, by assuming the titles of the Master of Peter and Philip, to win something of the power they possessed, and which he coveted.

**Ver. 10. To whom they all gave heed.** Men in that age were peculiarly liable to be deluded by the pretensions of false prophets, as Neander well observes: 'At that time an indefinite longing after a new voice from heaven—a strange, restless feeling in men's minds, such as usually goes before mighty changes in the history of men, was spread abroad; this vague, anxious feeling bewildered and deceived many' (from Neander's *Planting*, vol. i.).

**From the least to the greatest.** That is to say, men and women of all ages, young as well as old, were ready to listen to him.

**Ver. 11. He had bewitched them with sorceries.** Professor Westcott suggests 'that it would be interesting to inquire how far the magical arts universally attributed to Simon and his followers admit of a physical explanation. In his school, if anywhere, we should look for an advanced knowledge of nature' (*Hist. of the Canon*, chap. iv. sect. i. note, p. 301).

**Ver. 12. But when they believed Philip . . . they were baptized, both men and women.** 'Philip,' as Bishop Lightfoot observes (*Gulians*, Dissertation iii.), 'carried into practice the doctrine which Stephen preached and for which he died.' 'Stephen was the first to look steadfastly to the end of that which is abolished, to sound the death-knell of the Mosaic ordinances and the Temple worship, and to claim for the Gospel unfettered liberty and universal rights.' Philip, by preaching to and then baptizing a number of Samaritans who believed, was the founder of the earliest Gentile congregation. The first stones of the Church of the Gentiles were laid by those men who were dispersed when the persecution 'arose about Stephen.'

**Ver. 13. Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized.** It is not necessary to assume that the unhappy man was simply moved by the persuasion that Philip was a greater magician than himself, though no doubt this thought influenced him; but he seems to have accepted



the fact that Philip's Master was in some way or other the long-looked-for Messiah. Still he only admitted this belief as a matter of history; it had no effect, as we shall see presently, on his life, his heart all the while, though receiving the historic fact, remaining utterly unchanged and hardened.

*The Sanction of the Leaders of the Church is given to the Work of Philip among the Samaritans.*  
—*The Samaritan Mission of Peter and John,* 14-25.

Ver. 14. Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God. To formally sanction this work of Philip in Samaria, and the subsequent general admission of the Samaritan people into the Church of the Master, was for the College of Apostles in Jerusalem no slight matter, for it signified a complete breaking down of the old barriers of prejudice, behind which the orthodox Jew had rigidly entrenched himself. We can hardly understand now what a painful struggle it must have been for pious Jews like James, the Lord's brother, and John to concede that even the hated Samaritan had a right to the kingdom of heaven—that the bitterly hated, the 'accursed people,' as they deemed them, might join the Church of Christ on the same terms as a Hebrew of the Hebrews. And yet this is what the College of Apostles conceded when they sent two of their most distinguished members to lay hands on the baptized of Samaria. 'He who eats the bread of a Samaritan,' says the Talmud, 'is as one who eats swine's flesh.' This accursed people shall have no part in the resurrection of the dead.' To be a Samaritan, in the eyes of an austere Jew, was to have a devil (John viii. 48).

They sent unto them Peter and John. In accordance with the Master's first mission, when He called the Twelve unto Him, and began to send them forth by two and two (Mark vi. 7), so we find two together, Peter and John, in the Temple (Acts iii. 1); so Paul and Barnabas (Acts xiii. 2) are associated to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles; so later we find together Paul and Silas (Acts xv. 40) and Barnabas and Mark (Acts xv. 39). John is not mentioned after this in the Acts of the Apostles.

Vers. 15-17. On the whole question of this laying on of the apostles' hands in Samaria, see the Excursus at the end of this chapter.

Ver. 16. For as yet he was fallen upon none of them. It has been often asked whether this was owing to any defect in the faith of the Samaritans. Nothing, however, in the history would lead us to suppose that this was the case. The opinion of Chrysostom, followed by many modern commentators, supplies the most probable answer: 'Philip could not bestow the Holy Ghost, because he was not an apostle.' The plain truth seems to be: none but the apostles were empowered to bestow this mighty gift. The early cessation of miraculous power in the Church is discussed briefly in the Excursus at the end of this chapter. The special duty of imposition of hands on the baptized, up to this time exclusively belonged to the apostles. It appears subsequently to have passed to the Episcopal order, which, before the close of the first century, undoubtedly arose in the Christian Church; but while the solemn right to lay hands on the baptized, and thus formally to invoke the blessed presence of the Holy Ghost, was inherited by the bishops from the apostles, it

does not seem that the power of working miracles was ever communicated by the imposition of hands, by any save the apostles themselves.

Ver. 18. And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given. The gifts of the Holy Ghost were in this case plainly visible. The laying on of the apostles' hands conferred something more than the inward spiritual grace; outward miraculous gifts of some kind or other were plainly bestowed. The covetousness of Simon was excited by the sight of this strange power. He had watched Philip perform miracles, but never until he stood by John and Peter had he conceived it possible that this power was transferable.

He offered them money. His heart was utterly unmoved. His sordid, grasping nature remained unchanged, though he had heard the burning words of the missionaries of Jesus. He simply looked on John and Peter as magicians far superior to himself, as men more deeply versed in the secrets of the craft even than Philip, whose works he had been admiring and wondering at. He supposed the secret of these men, like everything else Simon knew of in this world, was to be purchased with gold and silver.

Ver. 20. Thy money perish with thee. This is no curse or imprecation on the part of Peter, for in ver. 22 we find the apostle exhorting the would-be magician to repentance. It is merely an expression of the strong abhorrence which an honest, righteous man would feel at such a miserable misconception of God's ways of working. Taken in conjunction with the reminder to repentance in ver. 22, it is an awful prediction of what would be the fate of the covetous man if his heart remain unchanged. Gold and silver would perish in the end. Equally valueless and perishable would be the Life of an unrighteous man. The corruptible nature of that gold and silver which man prizes so dearly seems to have been ever in St. Peter's mind, and to have entered continually into his arguments. See 1 Pet. i. 7, 18; and on the fatal covetousness of false teachers, perhaps the followers of this same unhappy man, see 2 Pet. ii. 3, and Acts iii. 6.

The gift of God. 'You thought the Holy Ghost was to be bought. Learn it is a free gift, bestowed when and where the Eternal chooses.'

Ver. 21. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter. More accurately rendered 'in this word'—that is to say, one whose heart is given up, as is yours, to covetousness and greed of gain, has no share in the word or doctrine which we teach, the doctrine which teaches the way and manner of the inward and outward gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Thy heart is not right. Is not sincere, as God sees it.

Ver. 22. If perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee. The words 'if perhaps' were uttered owing to the very grave character of the sin which St. Peter believed the impostor magician to have been guilty of. The apostle was ignorant whether the state of heart which prompted such a request as Simon's was capable of true repentance, but he doubtless spoke these grave, solemn words to stir up any feelings of remorse which might still be lingering in that hard, covetous heart. Alford's comment here is a weighty one: 'This verse is important taken in connection with John xx. 23, "Whosoever sins ye

remit, they are remitted unto them," etc., as showing how completely the apostles themselves referred the forgiveness of sins to, and left it in the sovereign power of God, and not to their own delegated power of absolution.'

Ver. 23. **For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity.** St. Peter here gives the reason why he doubts the possibility of forgiveness. It was not that he conceived it possible that God would ever refuse pardon to any really penitent sinner, no matter how deeply such a one might have sinned, but that he feared Simon's heart was full of bitter hate for his Master's blessed Gospel, and that his life was bound by the chain of sin.

Ver. 24. **Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me.** So Pharaoh entreated Moses to intercede for him with the Eternal (Ex. viii. 29, ix. 28, x. 17), and yet hardened his heart afterwards. Bengel observes here: 'He confesses his fear of punishment, not horror of guilt.' The history of the Acts never refers again to this episode; so, as far as the New Testament records are concerned, we are left in doubt whether or no St. Peter's solemn words had any effect on the subsequent life and conduct of Simon. Ecclesiastical tradition, however, takes up the story of the unhappy life. This gifted but deeply erring man seems, after his meeting with the apostles, to have gone on from bad to worse. He persevered in his dark pursuits, and soon became notorious as one of the most bitter of the opponents of Christianity.

Ver. 25. **And they . . . returned to Jerusalem.** They—that is, John and Peter—now left Philip to pursue his work alone, and returned to the capital city.

**And preached the gospel in many villages of the Samaritans.** On their way back to their own home, the two, deeply moved at the ready reception of the Word by this hitherto despised people, remembered how their Master, looking forward in His Divine foreknowledge to such an hour as this, had beheld these very fields of Samaria 'white already to harvest,' the harvest of the Lord (John iv. 35). With these words of the Redeemer ringing in their ears, John and Peter continued in many a Samaritan village the good work of Philip, and as they journeyed on to Jerusalem kept on proclaiming the good news of God among the homes of the Samaritan people. 'The same John,' be it remembered, 'who once wished for fire to come down from heaven to consume these very people, now preached to them the Gospel of peace. He had since that time learned much in the school of Christ. Then he knew not what spirit he was of, but now he was actuated by the Holy Spirit. It was a different kind of fire which he now prayed might descend from heaven upon these Samaritans—the fire of the Holy Ghost' (Gloag).

*The Acts of Philip the Deacon.—Episode of the Conversion and Baptism of the Ethiopian Eunuch, the Treasurer of the Queen of Ethiopia, 26-40.*

Ver. 26. **And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip.** The more accurate rendering, 'But an angel of the Lord,' is more in harmony with the history of the early days of the Church. Among the strange and supernatural manifestations which accompanied the laying of the first stones of the Christian Church, the visible manifestation of angels

is not the least remarkable. It was no special minister of the great King in this case, as we read of in the announcement to Zacharias the priest and Mary the virgin (Luke i. 19-26), but simply one of the army of Heaven. For other instances of this visible ministering on the part of angels in these first days, see Acts i. 10, v. 19, x. 3, xii. 7, xxviii. 23. There is no hint given here that this appearance took place in a dream or a vision. The writer of the 'Acts' here simply relates the actual appearance of an angelic being to Philip.

**Unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert.** Gaza was one of the oldest cities in the world. It is mentioned with Sodom and the cities of the plain before their destruction (Gen. x. 19). It was the chief city of the Philistines, and in later years was of great importance as a frontier fortress, and the key to Egypt on the south and to Syria on the north.

After many sieges and vicissitudes of fortune, we hear of it frequently during the Crusades. It still exists under the changed name of Ghuzzeh, and contains a population of about 15,000.

The exact application of the words, 'which is desert,' has given rise to much argument. Some suppose the words refer to the deserted state of Gaza, as though it were uninhabited. Another view prefers to understand the expression in a moral sense: 'This is desert,' being the angel's reason for Philip being sent to evangelise this region, in which the light of truth seemed hopelessly dimmed; but the simple meaning of the words gives the best sense. There were several roads which led to Gaza, and the angel carefully pointed out one of them to Philip as the way by which he was to go, knowing that he would thus meet the Ethiopian; so the heavenly messenger directed him to choose that particular road which, after passing Hebron, led through a desolate, solitary country. In other words, he said, 'Go to Gaza by the desert road.'

Ver. 27. **A man of Ethiopia.** This man was not, as some have suggested, a Jew who lived in Ethiopia, but most probably was a heathen convert to Judaism, and now was returning home from a pilgrimage to the chief shrine of his adopted religion. We know that at this time there were many Jews in Ethiopia.

**Under Candace queen of the Ethiopians.** Candace was the ordinary name of the female rulers of Merôe, the north part of Ethiopia. Eusebius, *H. E.* ii. 1, writing some three hundred years later, tells us that even in his days the custom still prevailed in Ethiopia of the supreme power being held by a female ruler. The title Candace was the customary title of the sovereign, as Pharaoh had been in Egypt, and Cæsar continued to be in Rome.

Ver. 28. **Read Esaias the prophet.** He was returning home, deeply impressed with the sanctuary, the wonders of which he had just been beholding, and whose strange, glorious history had so deeply interested him, and was reading the mystic words of one of the greatest of the Hebrew prophets. Probably the passage he was meditating on was one of those to which his attention had been just called in Jerusalem as referring to the sufferings of Messiah, concerning whom so many strange, mysterious sayings were then current in the holy city connected with that now famous persecuted sect which believed that the lately-crucified Jesus was the long-promised anointed Deliverer. The

scriptures he was reading were the Greek version of the LXX., well known throughout Egypt and the adjacent countries. It was a maxim of the Rabbis, that one who was on a journey and without a companion, should busy himself in the study of the law.

Vers. 30, 31. **Understandest thou what thou readest?** The last division of the prophecy of Isaiah contains a description of the 'servant of the Lord.' A famous enemy of Christianity has complained that Jesus Christ brought on His own crucifixion by a series of preconceived measures, merely to give the disciples who came after Him the triumph of an appeal to the old prophecies, and especially to the 53d chapter of Isaiah, which the eunuch was reading when Philip accosted him.

So clear, indeed, here is the correspondence between the prophecy and the history of the Passion, that in this 53d chapter we seem rather to be reading a history of the past than a prediction of something which was to take place in the far future. Jews in modern times have tried, but with a total want of success, to refer the 'servant of the Lord,' spoken of in the famous passage, now to Hezekiah, now to Jeremiah, now to Isaiah himself, sometimes to the people Israel collectively. But some of their best and most esteemed teachers, despairing of finding any other key to the prophecy, admit honestly that Messiah is here spoken of. This, for instance, is the interpretation of R. Solomon Jarchi in the twelfth century, and of R. Isaac Abarbanel in the fifteenth century, whose names stand among the very highest and most esteemed of Jewish divines and commentators.

Ver. 32. **The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth.** The whole passage (vers. 32, 33) is taken almost verbatim from the LXX. version of Isa. liii. 7, 8; the whole of the section is minutely descriptive of the circumstances of the Lord's Passion. This, the first part of it, found its fulfilment in the history of Jesus before Pilate and his other judges, and especially in His reply of gentle dignity to the man who struck Him for answering the high priest, and generally in the brave patience of His bearing throughout the whole course of His Passion.

Ver. 33. **In his humiliation his judgment was taken away.** The Greek version of the LXX., from which the Ethiopian eunuch was reading, translates the Hebrew in this passage with very great freedom. The literal rendering of the Hebrew would be: 'By oppression and a judicial sentence he was dragged to punishment'—that is to say, by an oppressive, unrighteous, judicial proceeding he was dragged to punishment. The LXX.

paraphrase this in the words: 'In his humiliation, his judgment'—that is, the right to justice—and humanity were taken (or withheld) from him.' Gloag thus enlarges it: 'Jesus appeared in a form so humble, a man so poor and insignificant, that Pilate, though convinced of His innocence, thought it not worth while to hazard anything to preserve His life.'

**His generation who shall declare?** But though so lowly, so mean, so poor, was His semblance on earth, who shall declare His generation? It is ineffable! for He is the eternal Son of God, begotten from everlasting of the Father.

**For his life is taken from the earth.** Not simply taken away, as the life of an ordinary mortal might be, but lifted up from the earth—referring to the ascension of Jesus Christ to the right hand of the Father, where He was before. And thus, though as far as man's eye could see His life among us was poor and humble, its beginning and end were alike incomprehensible—best described in His sacred words addressed to His own in that last evening: 'I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world; again, I leave the world, and go unto the Father' (John

xvi. 28; and compare Goulburn, *Acts of the Deacons*, chap. vii.).

Ver. 35. **Then Philip opened his mouth.** An oriental expression which occurs ordinarily before grave and weighty words (see Acts x. 34; Job iii. 1, xxxii. 20).

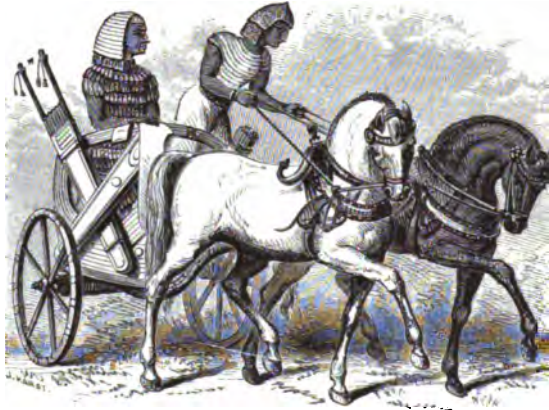
**And began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus.** Philip showed the strange and marvellous correspondence between the many descriptions of the

Messiah of the prophets and the now well-known life of Jesus of Nazareth, beginning his inspired teaching with an exposition of the passage of Isaiah which the Ethiopian was then reading.

Ver. 36. **A certain water.** Eusebius and Jerome point out as the scene of this baptism a fountain near Beth-sur, now a village, Beth-coron, not far from Hebron, some twenty miles south of Jerusalem.

**See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?** A proof, says Wordsworth, 'that Philip, in preaching Jesus, had preached the necessity of baptism' (so Aug.). 'By the expression, "Philip preached to him Jesus," St. Luke implies that Philip preached not only what is to be believed concerning Christ, but what is to be done by those who are joined to the unity of the body of Christ, and so preached to him the main points of Christian faith and duty.'

Ver. 37. This verse is one of the very few important doctrinal passages of the New Testament which the studies of late years on the subject of textual criticism have affected. The devout student of the word of God fearlessly accepts the con-



Ethiopian Chariot.

clusions which result from a careful examination of the varied evidence upon which the genuineness of each passage of the New Testament rests. The result of such study has been, that scholars have agreed to reject as undoubtedly spurious, here and there, a famous doctrinal text, such as 1 St. John v. 7, to mark as at least doubtful such a passage as Acts viii. 37. The words here are found in Irenæus, iii. 12 (second century); they are cited by this father without the least misgiving. The celebrated Codex E (Landianus) of the Acts (sixth century) contains them, but they appear in no other of the Uncial MSS. of the 'Acts'; they are found in the Philoxenian Syriac certainly, and in the Vulgate, etc. The Latin fathers, Cyprian, Jerome, and Augustine, were all acquainted with it. It was known and certainly well received in the Western or Latin Church, from the second century downwards, and afterwards made some way among the later Greek Codices and writers (see Scrivener, *New Testament Criticism*, pp. 387-443, 444). Meyer suggests that the words may have been taken, in the first instance, from some very early Baptismal

Liturgy, and thence copied by some scribe into a manuscript of the Acts. Of recent commentators, Wordsworth declines to expunge them, and Bornemann includes them in brackets; but the majority exclude them altogether from the text.

Ver. 38. **And he baptized him.** The comment of Gregory of Nazianzen, about A.D. 370-380, on this verse, quoted by Wordsworth, is curious and interesting: 'Let me be a Philip, and be thou a minister of Candace. Say, Here is water, what hindereth me to be baptized? Seize the opportunity. Though an Ethiop in body, be thou pure in heart; and do not say: Let a bishop baptize me, and if a presbyter, let him be unmarried. Man looketh on the face, but God on the heart. Any minister can cleanse you by baptism if he is not alien from the Church. One minister may be of gold, another of iron, but they are both like rings which have the seal of Christ. Let them stamp on thee, who art the wax, the image of the great King; there may be a difference in the metal, there is none in the seal' (St. Greg. Nazianzen, *An Oration to those who delay their Baptism*).



Azotus.

Ver. 39. **The Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip.** These words clearly relate a supernatural disappearance of Philip. We possess instances of a similar miraculous rapture, in the history of Elijah (1 Kings xviii. 12; 2 Kings ii. 11), in the writings of Ezekiel, where we read on several occasions that the Spirit lifted him up and took him away (see Ezek. iii. 12). On one occasion 'the Spirit' put forth the form of a hand and took him by a lock of his head, and lifted him up between earth and heaven, and brought him in the visions of God to Jerusalem, to the door of the inner gate. The Greek word translated 'caught away' is the same as that employed by St. Paul, where he speaks of his 'rapture' into the third heaven and into Paradise—'caught up to the third heaven,' 'caught up into Paradise,' where he heard the unspeakable words (2 Cor. xii. 2, 4). The same remarkable word is used (1 Thess. iv. 17) in the description of the Lord's second Advent, after the resurrection of the dead in Christ: 'We which are alive and remain shall be "caught up" together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air.'

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**He went on his way rejoicing.** The sudden disappearance of Philip seemed to the Ethiopian eunuch a miraculous assurance that the message and instruction he had received was indeed from heaven, and thus strengthened, went on his way rejoicing. There is a tradition that this minister of Candace, whose name was Judich, preached the Gospel on his return to Ethiopia with great success, and that his royal mistress was among his converts; but we possess no certain records of the conversion of any number of the Ethiopians until the time of Frumentius in the reign of Constantine (fourth century).

Ver. 40. **But Philip was found at Azotus.** Azotus, better known as Ashdod, one of the principal Philistine cities, near to the sea-coast. The site is now marked by a mound covered with broken pottery and a few pieces of marble (see 1 Sam. v. 3; Amos i. 8).

**Till he came to Cæsarea.** Cæsarea became Philip's home. He probably made it for many years the centre of missionary enterprises. Here, after some twenty years, we find him still, when

Saul, *now* breathing threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, was welcomed, together with St. Luke, the reputed writer of these 'Acts,' by this same Philip the deacon and his four prophet daughters, as the great and honoured Christian missionary.

Cæsarea was distant about seventy miles from Jerusalem, and was situated on the shores of the Mediterranean Sea. Before the days of the great Herod, it was merely a station for vessels. Herod, however, designed to make it the commercial capital of Palestine; he adorned it with marble palaces, provided it with a magnificent harbour, larger than the Piræus at Athens, and with a vast quay. In the midst of the new city rose, on an eminence, the Temple of Cæsar, with statues of the Emperor and of Rome. With slavish adulation, King Herod named the city after his powerful patron Augustus, *Cæsarea*, under whose mighty protection for the present and the far future he placed the new capital of the old Land of Promise. After Herod's death, Cæsarea became the residence of the Roman governors of the country. Here the well-known Procurators Pontius Pilate, Felix, and Festus held their 'courts.' Here Paul was subsequently tried before that brilliant assembly, presided over by the Roman governor, and King Agrippa, and the infamous Princess Bernice.

At the commencement of the Jewish war, we read of 20,000 Jews resident at Cæsarea being massacred. Vespasian was saluted emperor first in this place. In grateful memory, probably, of this circumstance, he raised it to the dignity of a colony; but its prosperity seems gradually to have decayed. We hear of it now and again in the days of the Crusaders, but it has been for several centuries a mere heap of ruins. A few fishers' huts now occupy the site of this once proud capital.

#### EXCURSUS.

##### THE LAYING ON OF THE APOSTLES' HANDS IN SAMARIA—ITS INFLUENCE ON THE PRACTICE OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

'The ancient custom of the Church was, after they had baptized, to add thereunto imposition of hands with effectual prayer for the illumination of God's most Holy Spirit, to confirm and perfect that which the grace of the same Spirit had begun in baptism' (Hooker, *Eccles. Polity*, v. 66). This ordinance was derived from the practice of the apostles, as related in this passage, and also in Acts xix. 6; see also Heb. vi. 2.

It was no new custom; it had ever been practised in the Church of the Old Testament. Thus Israel, when he blessed Ephraim and Manasses, laid his hands upon their heads and prayed (Gen. xlviii. 14). Thus Moses ordained Joshua to be his successor (Num. xxvii. 18). How common the practice was on solemn occasions, we see from the fact of the women of Israel bringing young children to Christ to put His hands on them and pray.

After the Lord's ascension, prayer and the imposition of the apostles' hands were the means whereby, after baptism, the first believers became partakers in greater or less degree of the gifts and graces of the Holy Ghost. Of these gifts and graces, the power of working miracles, which so excited the wonder and envy of Simon Magus, was not (except perhaps in very rare and peculiar

cases) extended beyond a certain few of those disciples upon whom the apostles themselves laid their hands; but though these special miraculous gifts, which in some cases accompanied the imposition of the apostles' hands, perhaps never very numerous, ceased when the apostles passed away, the rite of laying on of hands, possessing a deeper signification than the mere imparting a temporary miraculous power, was never discontinued, but remained a practice in all the churches.

In the first instance, we know that this sacred rite was performed by the apostles; nor does it appear that this solemn confirmation of the baptized was ever performed in the first years of Christianity by any except the apostles. We find a special mention of St. Paul laying his hands on certain newly-baptized converts. When Episcopal government first appeared in Gentile Christendom is uncertain; early in the second century the Episcopal office, we know, was firmly and widely established. Professor Lightfoot, adopting in great measure the view of Rothe, concludes that during the last thirty years of the first century, in the lifetime of St. John, the new constitution of the Church was organised, and many of the special duties and privileges of the apostles passed to the bishops, who succeeded them in all countries as governors of the churches. Among these special functions hitherto reserved for men of apostolic dignity was 'confirmation.' At the end of the second century Tertullian wrote; his testimony carries us back to the very verge of the times when men lived who must have heard and seen St. John. In his treatise *De Baptismo*, he writes as though 'confirmation' was the unvarying custom in North Africa. Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, writing about fifty years later, alludes to it as to an ordinary office of his Episcopal order. 'They who are baptized,' he says, 'are brought to the chief pastors of the church, that, by our prayer (Cyprian was a bishop) and the laying on of hands, they may receive the Holy Ghost.' Firmilian, bishop of Cæsarea in Cappadocia, who lived about the same time, alludes to bishops as the ordinary ministers of this office. The canons of the council of Eliberis, held not long after, speak of this confirmation of the baptized by the bishop as an universally practised rite. Jerome in the latter end of the fourth century tells us that it was the general practice of the Roman Church for bishops to go about the country villages and remoter places in their dioceses to give imposition of hands to such as were baptized by presbyters and deacons (*Adv. Lucifer*, c. 4). Augustine about the same period, writing of the practice of the North African Church, says: 'The apostles only laid hands on men, that the Holy Ghost by their prayers might descend on them, which custom the Church now observed and practised by her bishops or governors also' (*De Trinitate*, i. 15). Ambrose, bishop of Milan, a few years before had held similar language (see his treatise, *De Sacram.* l. 3).

We therefore confidently conclude that the Church of Christ from the very earliest times supplemented baptism by prayer and the imposition of hands, to the end that the Holy Ghost might be poured upon those already baptized, grounding the universal custom upon the example of Peter and John related in the eighth chapter of the 'Acts.' In the first days, it is clear that the apostles alone administered the holy rite. As the Church developed, the duty of administering con-







*from photographs.*

**DAMASCUS.**

firmation passed, with many other of the exclusive privileges of the apostles, to the bishops, who, twenty or thirty years before the close of the first century, probably succeeded to the government of the various churches. Never, except in some special and extraordinary cases, does it seem that this solemn rite of imposition of hands was performed except by the bishop himself.

At the first, there is no doubt but that baptism was immediately followed by confirmation; but it is clear that very soon an interval longer or shorter severed the sacrament from the subsequent rite. And the reasons for this severance are obvious; for, as converts to Christianity multiplied, these in the first instance were more frequently baptized by a minister of an inferior degree, by presbyters or mere deacons, who might baptize but not confirm, as in the case instanced in our present passage when John and Peter confirmed those whom Philip had already baptized. Then, too, as the Church grew older, and Christian families multiplied rapidly in all the great centres of the civilised

world, Christian parents began to bring their little ones early to the baptismal font to win for them the covenant blessing, thus laying for them the first foundations of the life of faith. These little ones, early admitted into the family of God, in good time became of an age when they could discharge the duties of Christian men and women; then and not till then did they receive the blessing invoked by the solemn laying on of the chief pastor's hands. And so the rite became in the very earliest times separated from the sacrament—the sacrament of baptism admitting them as children into the family of God, and the rite of confirmation coming in subsequently and arming those already baptized, against sin and the varied temptations of life, by means of, to use Tertullian's weighty words again, 'imposition of hands, with invocation and invitation of the Holy Ghost, which willingly cometh down from the Father to rest upon the purified and blessed bodies, as it were acknowledging the waters of baptism, a fit seat' (*De Baptismo*, c. 8).

## CHAPTER IX.

### *The Appearance of the Risen Lord to Saul—He becomes a Believer in the Lord Jesus—Certain Acts of Peter.*

- 1 **A**ND <sup>a</sup> Saul, yet <sup>b</sup> breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto 'the high priest, And desired of him letters to <sup>d</sup> Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of *this way*,<sup>1</sup> whether they were men or women, he might bring *them* bound unto Jerusalem. 'And, as *he* journeyed, he came near <sup>d</sup> Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: And he fell to the earth,<sup>2</sup> and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou <sup>e</sup> me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord <sup>f</sup> said, I am Jesus <sup>e</sup> whom thou persecutest: *it is* hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And he, trembling and astonished, said, Lord, <sup>g</sup> what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord *said* unto him, <sup>i</sup> Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou <sup>h</sup> must do. And <sup>j</sup> the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, <sup>m</sup> hearing a voice,<sup>4</sup> but seeing no *man*. And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, <sup>n</sup> he saw *no man*:<sup>5</sup> but <sup>o</sup> they led him by the hand, and brought *him* into Damascus. And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink.
- 10 <sup>p</sup> And there was a certain disciple at <sup>d</sup> Damascus, named

<sup>a</sup> See ch. viii. 3.  
<sup>b</sup> Ps. xxvii. 12.  
Cp. Job xv. 13.  
<sup>c</sup> Ch. xxii. 5.  
xxvi. 10, 11.  
<sup>d</sup> See 1 Kings xi. 24; Isa. vii. 8. Cp. 1 Kings xx. 34.  
<sup>e</sup> So ver. 8; ch. xxii. 6-11, xxvi. 12-18.  
<sup>f</sup> 1 Cor. xv. 8.  
<sup>g</sup> Zech. ii. 8. So Isa. lxiii. 9. Cp. 2 Cor. i. 5.

<sup>h</sup> See Lu. iii. 10.  
<sup>i</sup> Cp. Ezek. iii. 22.  
<sup>j</sup> So 1 Cor. ix. 26.  
<sup>k</sup> So Dan. x. 7.  
<sup>m</sup> Cp. ch. xxii. 9 with Jo. viii. 43, xii. 29.  
<sup>n</sup> Cp. ch. xxii. 11.  
<sup>o</sup> So ch. xiii. 11.

<sup>p</sup> Ch. xxii. 12.

<sup>1</sup> of the way

<sup>2</sup> upon the earth

<sup>3</sup> The older authorities omit 'the Lord;' render, 'and he said.' Also the older authorities omit the following words: 'it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And he, trembling and astonished, said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him.'

<sup>4</sup> the voice

<sup>5</sup> The more trustworthy of the ancient authorities read 'nothing' instead of 'no man.'



- Ananias; and to him said the Lord in <sup>a</sup> a vision, Ananias. <sup>g</sup> Ver. 12. See ch. xii. 9.
- 11 And he said, Behold, I *am here*, Lord. And the Lord *said* <sup>h</sup> Ver. 17. See Lu. xii. 13.
- unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, <sup>i</sup> Ver. 1. See ch. viii. 3.
- and inquire in the house of Judas for *one* called Saul, of Tarsus: <sup>j</sup> Vers. 32, 41; ch. xxv. 12.
- 12 for, behold, he prayeth, And hath seen in <sup>a</sup> a vision <sup>k</sup> a man <sup>l</sup> Rom. i. 7, xvi. 2, 15; 1 Cor. i. 4, 17.
- named Ananias coming in, and <sup>m</sup> putting *his* hand on him, that <sup>n</sup> Ver. 21; ch. xxii. 16.
- 13 he might receive his sight. Then Ananias answered, Lord, I <sup>o</sup> Rom. x. 23; 1 Cor. i. 2.
- have heard by many <sup>p</sup> of this man, <sup>q</sup> how much evil he hath <sup>r</sup> So ch. viii. 3.
- 14 done to thy <sup>s</sup> saints at Jerusalem: And here he hath authority <sup>t</sup> 2 Tim. i. 12.
- 15 from the chief priests to bind all <sup>u</sup> that call on thy name. But <sup>v</sup> Cp. Rom. 12, 23 (Gk.).
- the Lord said unto him, Go *thy way*: for he is <sup>w</sup> a chosen vessel <sup>x</sup> So ch. xii. 2.
- 16 unto me, <sup>y</sup> to bear my name before <sup>z</sup> the Gentiles, and <sup>aa</sup> kings, <sup>ab</sup> Rom. i. 17; 1 Cor. xv. 23; Gal. i. 15; Eph. i. 9.
- 17 and the children of Israel: For <sup>ac</sup> I will show him how great <sup>ad</sup> Rom. i. 5 (Gk.).
- <sup>ae</sup> things he must suffer <sup>af</sup> for my name's sake. <sup>ag</sup> And Ananias went <sup>ah</sup> xv. 16; Gal. i. 16, 17; Eph. i. 17.
- his way, and entered into <sup>ai</sup> the house; and <sup>aj</sup> putting his hands <sup>ak</sup> 1 Tim. i. 7, 2 Tim. i. 12.
- on him, said, <sup>al</sup> Brother Saul, the Lord, *even* Jesus, <sup>am</sup> that appeared <sup>an</sup> iv. 17.
- unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou <sup>ao</sup> Ch. xiv. 27, 23, xxv. 1, 32; 2 Tim. iv. 16.
- mightest receive thy sight, and <sup>ap</sup> be filled with the Holy Ghost. <sup>aq</sup> Ch. xx. 23, xxi. 11; 2 Cor. vi. 4, 5.
- 18 And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: <sup>ar</sup> xii. 23; 1 Thes. ii. 3.
- and he received sight forthwith, <sup>as</sup> and arose, and <sup>at</sup> was baptized. <sup>au</sup> Ch. xxi. 13.
- 19 And <sup>av</sup> when he had received meat, he was strengthened. <sup>aw</sup> Then <sup>ax</sup> Ch. xxii. 13.
- was Saul <sup>ay</sup> certain days with the disciples which were at <sup>az</sup> Ver. 11.
- 20 Damascus. And straightway he preached Christ <sup>ba</sup> in the <sup>bb</sup> Ver. 12.
- 21 synagogues, that he is <sup>bc</sup> the Son of God. But all that heard <sup>bd</sup> See ch. xii. 20.
- him* were amazed, and said, Is not this he that <sup>be</sup> destroyed <sup>bf</sup> See ch. ii. 15.
- them <sup>bg</sup> which called on this name in Jerusalem, <sup>bh</sup> and came <sup>bi</sup> See ch. ii. 4.
- hither for that *intent*, <sup>bj</sup> that he might bring them bound unto <sup>bk</sup> Ch. xxii. 16.
- 22 the chief priests? But Saul increased the more in strength, <sup>bl</sup> Cp. ver. 7.
- and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, <sup>bm</sup> proving <sup>bn</sup> Ch. xxvi. 32.
- that this is *very* <sup>bo</sup> Christ. <sup>bp</sup> See Mat. xiv. 33.
- 23 And after that many days were fulfilled, the Jews took <sup>bq</sup> Gal. i. 13 (Gk.).
- 24 counsel to kill him: But their <sup>br</sup> laying await was known <sup>bs</sup> Ver. 14.
- Saul. <sup>bt</sup> And they watched the gates <sup>bu</sup> day and night to kill <sup>bv</sup> Ch. viii. 3.
- 25 him. Then the disciples <sup>bw</sup> took him by night, and <sup>bx</sup> let *him* <sup>by</sup> Ver. 2.
- 26 down by the wall in a <sup>bz</sup> basket. <sup>ca</sup> And <sup>cb</sup> when Saul <sup>cc</sup> was come <sup>cd</sup> Ch. xvi. 10 (Gk.).
- to Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples: but <sup>ce</sup> Soc. xviii. 28. Cp. ch. xvi. 3.
- they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was <sup>cf</sup> a <sup>cg</sup> 17, 18; Ch. xx. 3, 19; xxiii. 30; the Gk. So ch. xxiii. 12.

<sup>f</sup> See Rev. iv. 8.

<sup>g</sup> See Mat. xvi. 10.

<sup>h</sup> 2 Cor. xi. 33. So Josh. ii. 25; 1 Sam. xix. 12. See Mat. x. 23.

<sup>i</sup> Ch. xxii. 17-20.

<sup>a</sup> The words 'in a vision' are not found in the most ancient authorities.

<sup>g</sup> or Holy Spirit <sup>h</sup> as it were scales

<sup>i</sup> 'forthwith' is not found in the more ancient authorities.

<sup>j</sup> The older authorities omit 'Saul'; render, 'and he was.'

<sup>k</sup> The older authorities read 'Jesus' in place of 'Christ' here.

<sup>l</sup> omit 'very.' <sup>m</sup> but their plot became known

<sup>n</sup> 'But his disciples' is the more trustworthy reading.

<sup>o</sup> but let him down through the wall, lowering him in a basket

<sup>p</sup> The most ancient authorities omit 'Saul'; render, 'but when he.'

<sup>q</sup> not believing that he was, etc.

- 27 disciple. But <sup>x</sup> Barnabas took him, and brought *him* <sup>y</sup> to the apostles, and declared unto them <sup>z</sup> how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and <sup>a</sup> how he had
- 28 <sup>b</sup> preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus. And he <sup>c</sup> was with them <sup>d</sup> coming in and going out at Jerusalem.
- 29 And he <sup>e</sup> spake boldly <sup>f</sup> in the name of the Lord Jesus, <sup>g</sup> and disputed against the <sup>h</sup> Grecians: but <sup>i</sup> they went about to slay
- 30 him. <sup>j</sup> Which when <sup>k</sup> the brethren knew, they brought him down to <sup>l</sup> Cæsarea, and sent him forth to <sup>m</sup> Tarsus. Then had <sup>n</sup> the churches <sup>o</sup> rest throughout all Judea and Galilee and <sup>p</sup> Samaria, and were <sup>q</sup> edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the <sup>r</sup> comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied.
- 32 And it came to pass, as <sup>s</sup> Peter passed throughout all quarters, he came down also to <sup>t</sup> the saints which dwelt at
- 33 Lydda. And there he found a certain man named Æneas, which had kept his bed eight years, and was sick of the palsy.
- 34 And Peter said unto him, Æneas, <sup>u</sup> Jesus Christ maketh thee whole: arise, and make thy bed. And he arose immediately.
- 35 And all that dwelt at Lydda and <sup>v</sup> Saron <sup>w</sup> saw him, and <sup>x</sup> turned to the Lord.
- 36 Now there was at <sup>y</sup> Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas: this *woman* was full
- 37 of <sup>z</sup> good works and alms-deeds which she did. And it came to pass in those days, that she was sick, and died: whom when
- 38 they had washed, they laid *her* in an <sup>a</sup> upper chamber. And forasmuch as Lydda was nigh to Joppa, and the disciples had heard that Peter was there, they sent unto him two men, desiring *him* that *he* would not <sup>b</sup> delay to come to them. Then Peter arose and went with them. When he was come, they brought him into the <sup>c</sup> upper chamber: and all the widows stood by him weeping, and showing the coats and garments
- 40 which Dorcas made while she was with them. But Peter <sup>d</sup> put *them* all forth, and <sup>e</sup> kneeled down, and <sup>f</sup> prayed; and turning *him* <sup>g</sup> to the body <sup>h</sup> said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her
- 41 eyes: and when she saw Peter, <sup>i</sup> she sat up. And he gave her *his* hand, and lifted her up, and when he had called <sup>j</sup> the saints and widows, presented her alive. And it was <sup>k</sup> known through-
- 43 out all <sup>l</sup> Joppa; and <sup>m</sup> many believed in the Lord. And it came to pass, that he tarried many days in Joppa with one <sup>n</sup> Simon a tanner.

<sup>19</sup> and speaking boldly<sup>20</sup> The oldest authorities omit 'Jesus.'<sup>21</sup> And he was speaking and disputing against the Grecian Jews: but they were endeavouring to kill him<sup>22</sup> The older authorities read the singular here: 'the church . . . and was edified . . . was multiplied.'<sup>23</sup> Sharon<sup>24</sup> omit him.<sup>25</sup> and seeing Peter<sup>26</sup> and it became

<sup>x</sup> See ch. iv.  
<sup>y</sup> Not as Gal. i.  
 18, 19?  
<sup>z</sup> Vers. 3-6.  
<sup>a</sup> Vers. 20, 27.  
<sup>b</sup> Ver. 29. See  
 ch. iv. 29.  
<sup>c</sup> So Jo. x. 9;  
 ch. i. 21. See  
 Nu. xxvii. 17.

<sup>d</sup> Ch. vi. 1, xi.  
 20.  
<sup>e</sup> So ver. 23.  
 Cp. ch. xxii.  
 18.  
<sup>f</sup> See Jo. xxi.  
 23.  
<sup>g</sup> See ch. v.ii.  
 40.  
<sup>h</sup> Ver. 17.  
<sup>i</sup> Cp. ch. viii. 1.  
<sup>j</sup> See ch. i. 8.  
<sup>k</sup> 1 Cor. viii. 1.  
 x. 23; xiv. 4.  
<sup>l</sup> 1 Thess.  
 v. 11. So ch.  
 xx. 32 (Gk.).  
<sup>m</sup> See 1. u. vi.  
 24. Cp. Jo.  
 xiv. 16 (Gk.).  
<sup>n</sup> Cp. ch. viii.  
 25.  
<sup>o</sup> Ver. 13.  
<sup>p</sup> So ch. iii. 6.  
 16, iv. 10.  
<sup>q</sup> See Josh. xii.  
 18.  
<sup>r</sup> Ch. xi. 21.  
<sup>s</sup> See Josh. xix.  
 46.

<sup>t</sup> Rom. xiii. 3;  
 2 Cor. ix. 8;  
 Eph. ii. 10;  
 Col. i. 10; 2  
 Thes. ii. 17;  
 1 Tim. ii. 10.  
<sup>u</sup> v. 10; 2 Tim.  
 ii. 21, iii. 17;  
 Tit. i. 16,  
 iii. 1; Heb.  
 xiii. 21.  
<sup>v</sup> Ver. 39. See  
 ch. i. 13.  
<sup>w</sup> Nu. xxii. 16  
 (Heb. and  
 Gk.).

<sup>x</sup> Mat. ix. 25.

<sup>y</sup> See ch. vii.  
 60.  
<sup>z</sup> Cp. Jas. v.  
 14, 15.  
<sup>a</sup> See Mk. v.  
 41.  
<sup>b</sup> Ver. 13.

<sup>c</sup> So Jo. xi. 45.  
 xii. 11; ch.  
 xi. 21.

<sup>d</sup> Ch. x. 6.

*The Damascus Journey of Saul, 1, 2.*

Ver. 1. **And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord.** The narrative is here taken up again from chap. viii. 3, where we left the young Pharisee Saul 'making havock of the Church.' Some months at least had probably elapsed, during which period the events related in the 'Acts of Philip the Deacon,' chap. viii., took place. The work of persecution had been actively carried on in the city and adjacent districts, and now the chief inquisitor Saul, to use his own words (chap. xxvi. 11), 'being exceedingly mad against the followers of Jesus, determined to search them out and exterminate them in districts and cities far remote from Jerusalem.' His tone of mind at the time is graphically described by the writer of the 'Acts' in the words, 'Saul, breathing out;' or more accurately 'breathing,' not merely 'threatening,' but in his blind rage even 'death' against them. Menace and slaughter constituted at this period of his life the vital air which he exhaled and inhaled.

**Went unto the high priest.** The great Sanhedrim claimed and exercised over the Jews in foreign countries supreme power in religious questions. The high priest in this case, as frequently, though not invariably, was president of the Sanhedrim. His name is not certainly known, as the exact date of this mission of Saul is doubtful, and the high-priestly office was much interfered with by the Roman government at this time. We read of Jonathan, the son of Annas, and his brother Theophilus in turn, during the years 37, 38, enjoying this high dignity, from which the famous Caiaphas had been deposed A.D. 36. But thereal power now, as at the time of the crucifixion of Jesus, was in the hands of Annas, the father-in-law of Caiaphas, who was regarded by the nation as the legitimate high priest.

Ver. 2. **And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues.** The Jews at Damascus were very numerous. The religion of Jesus had been preached most probably by individual believers, driven away from Jerusalem at the time of the persecution, but no doubt Damascus Jews had been among the converted on the first Pentecost.

**Of this way.** This expression is a favourite one with the author of the 'Acts.' It signifies the religion of Jesus (see Acts xix. 9, xxii. 4, xxiv. 22). It became soon a well-known and loved form of words in the early Church. It was to these first followers of the Crucified the way—the way that leads to heaven, as Chrysostom beautifully terms it; the way, as Bengel tells us, we must walk, not loiter over.

*The Conversion of the Pharisee Leader Saul, 3-9.*

After the Passion of the Lord, the conversion of St. Paul is the event to which attention is most frequently called in the sacred writings. Many times does this chiefest of our Christian teachers allude to it in his Epistles. Three times in this earliest of Christian histories is the relation repeated with more or less detail—once by Luke in this ninth chapter; twice by the apostle himself: in chap. xxii., in his address to the people from the Temple stairs; in chap. xxvi., in his defence before Agrippa the king, and Festus the Roman procurator.

Three times, then, is this strange and marvellous story, which has had such a mighty influence upon

the destinies of mankind, repeated. In this triple relation we cannot help discerning a striking analogy to the triple relation in the three first Gospels of so many of our Lord's most remarkable acts and teaching. As in the gospel history an event or a discourse is often told three times, each recital differing from the other in many little circumstances, but each recital preserving throughout the same grand unity; so in the book of the 'Acts' is the conversion of the Pharisee Saul told, each narrative of the great event supplying some little fact or circumstance passed over in the others, yet all the three uniting in the main features of the awful scene—namely, the blinding light of glory (Acts ix. 3, xxii. 6, xxvi. 13); the voice from heaven heard and understood by the Pharisee Saul (Acts ix. 5, xxii. 8, xxvi. 14); the appearance of a glorified form, seen by and stamped for ever on the memory of him whom men knew afterwards as Paul (Acts ix. 17, xxii. 14, xxvi. 16),—each recital, too, agreeing with the repeated testimony of the Epistles, that Saul himself was fully convinced of the reality of the appearance of Christ to him.

Ver. 3. **And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus.** The first view of this city, when the dim outline of her gardens becomes visible, is universally famous. The prospect has been always the same. The white buildings of Damascus gleamed in the mid-day sun before the eyes of Saul, as they do before a traveller's eyes at this day, resting like an island of Paradise in the green enclosure of its beautiful gardens. It is the oldest city in the world. It was founded before Baalbec and Palmyra, and it has outlived them both. While Babylon is a heap in the desert and Tyre a ruin on the shore, it remains what it was called in the prophecy of Isaiah, 'the head of Syria' (Isa. vii. 8). Abraham's steward, we read, was Eliezer of Damascus (see Howson, *St. Paul*, chap. iii.).

Throughout the history of Israel, Damascus, her kings and armies, are constantly mentioned. Her mercantile greatness during this period is indicated in Ezekiel's words addressed to Tyre (Ezek. xxvii. 16-18). As centuries passed by, Damascus seemed to grow in power and grandeur. The Emperor Julian, in the fourth century of the Christian era, describes it as the 'eye of the East.' It reached its highest point of prosperity in the golden days of Mohammedan rule, when it became the royal residence of the Ommiad Caliphs and the metropolis of the Mohammedan world. It is still a great and most important city, with a population variously stated from 150,000 to 250,000 souls.

**And suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven.** From the recitals of the same event in chaps. xxii. and xxvi., we learn it was about noon at mid-day. Then in the full splendour of an oriental sun at noon, around the Pharisee leader and his companions there flashed the blinding light of the Divine glory. It was the Shekinah, the glory in which Christ now dwells. Rays of this glory now and again have been permitted to fall on men's eyes. It shone round Moses when he had been with the God of Israel on the mount; it rested at intervals on the golden mercy-seat of the ark, between the cherubim; it filled the Temple of Solomon on the dedication morning; it shone round the transfigured Jesus and the glorified Moses and Elias on Tabor; it flashed round the heads of the disciples in tongues of fire, while they

prayed and waited for the Holy Ghost on the first Pentecost morning; and years after, John in his lonely watch at Patmos saw it encompassing the Son of man, when, awe-struck, he fell at the feet of the glorified Redeemer as one that was dead. In this blinding light Saul perceived the glorified body of Jesus. This we gather from Ananias' words, ver. 17: 'The Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest;' from ver. 27, when Barnabas declares to the apostles 'how he (Saul) had seen the Lord in the way;' from chap. xxii. 14, when Saul is spoken of 'as seeing the Just One;' from 1 Cor. ix. 1, Paul's words, 'Have I not seen Jesus Christ the Lord?' and again, from 1 Cor. xv. 8, his own words, 'Last of all He was seen of me also.'

We gather, then, from the narrative that Saul alone saw the form of the Redeemer in the shining glory. Braver perhaps than his companions, owing to his fervid, intense conviction that he was doing what he believed the will and work of the God of his fathers, less terrified than the men who journeyed with him by the awful vision of glory, while they, overcome with fear and awe, did not dare, after the first blinding glare had struck their eyes, to look up and gaze into the dazzling light, the Pharisee Saul seems to have looked on stedfastly for a short time, and as he gazed into the glory he saw the form of the risen Jesus. This at least suggests a reason for Saul's subsequent blindness, which lasted three days, until the visit and action of Ananias,—a blindness which seems to have affected only Saul among that company of travellers.

He seems certainly to have gazed into that blinding, glorious light longer and more attentively than his companions; hence his after suffering. For even subsequent to the interview with Ananias,—although, when the disciple of Jesus had laid his hands on him, the blinded eyes were opened,—Saul does not appear to have ever recovered his sight as before. He came by degrees to learn, that never until he should gaze again on the glory of that light, and the One whom it environed, in the King's city, would that dimness, and perhaps a constant sense of pain, be removed from those dazzled eyes which had gazed for a minute into the Divine splendour. We possess several apparent allusions in the subsequent history of St. Paul of this painful disease in the eyes. See Acts xiii. 9, where the earnest gaze probably indicated dimness of vision on the part of Paul; and Acts xxiii. 1, on which occasion the same partial blindness, some think, prevented Paul from recognising the high priest when he addressed him in the Sanhedrim council. Compare Gal. iv. 13-15, where not improbably this disease in the eyes is alluded to, and Gal. vi. 11, where not a few expositors have supposed that the expression *σκληροὶ γράμματι* in ver. 2, translated in the English Version, 'how large a letter,'—literally, 'in what large letters,'—refers to the great rugged characters written by his own hand at the end of his Epistle, dictated to a scribe,—the weakness in his eyes preventing him from writing, and necessitating the employment of an amanuensis.

Ver. 4. **And heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul.** While the others were stunned, stupefied, and confused, a clear Light broke in terribly on the soul of one of the little company. A voice spoke articulately to him, which to the rest was a sound mysterious and indistinct. He heard what they did not hear; he saw what they

did not see: to them the awful sound was without a meaning. He heard the voice of the Son of God: to them it was a bright light which suddenly surrounded them. He saw Jesus, whom he was persecuting (Conybeare and Howson).

**Why persecutest thou me?** Chrysostom paraphrases the question thus: 'What wrong great or small hast thou suffered from me, that thou doest these things?' 'Me.' The Lord here seems to recall His own words: 'He that heareth you heareth Me, and He that despiseth you despiseth Me' (St. Luke x. 16), and also the king's solemn words in St. Matt. xx. 35-45.

Ver. 5. **And he said, Who art thou, Lord?** For a moment, perhaps, the awe-struck earnest Pharisee, while he gazed on the sweet face of the Master, which if he had not seen he must so often have heard described, in the midst of the glory, and listened to the voice speaking to him, might have doubted who it was. So he stammered out the question in the text; but the hesitation could have been but momentary. Conscience itself, as Bengel remarks, would whisper, 'It is Jesus;' he hardly needed the reply which quickly came.

**And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest.** Why this answer, asks Chrysostom, from the glorified One? 'Why did he not say, I am the Son of God, I am the Eternal Word, I am He that sitteth on the Father's right hand, I am He that stretcheth out the heavens . . . who made the angels? . . . Why, instead of speaking these deep, grand, lofty words, did He say simply, I am Jesus of Nazareth whom thou persecutest? . . . If He had said to him (Saul), I am the Son of God, I am the Eternal Word, He who made the heavens, then he (Saul) would have been able to reply, The object of my persecution was a different one from this' . . . So the glorified One simply replied: 'I am Jesus of Nazareth whom thou persecutest.'

**It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.** These words are an interpolation here: they are borrowed from Paul's own account of his conversion (chap. xxvi. 14), where they are undoubtedly genuine. See the Excursus at the end of this chapter, where the words are discussed at some length.

Ver. 7. **The men who journeyed with him stood speechless.** In chap. xxvi. 14 Paul tells King Agrippa how 'we were all fallen to the earth;' here, in the narrative of Luke, we read how 'they stood speechless.' The words 'stood speechless' do not signify apparently that they stood erect, in distinction from lying prostrate, but that, overpowered with what they saw and heard, they were fixed, rooted as it were to the spot. It must also be borne in mind, that the fact, which it was especially desired that the reader or hearer of this narration should be impressed with, was not that the 'men stood' or were 'fallen to the ground,'—this detail is utterly unimportant,—but that they were speechless and confounded.

**Hearing a voice.** In chap. xxii. 9, Paul, speaking to the people from the Temple stairs, relates 'how they heard not the voice of Him that spake to me;' while here, in Luke's narrative of the same event, we read of the companions of Paul 'hearing a voice.' Of the many solutions that have been proposed to reconcile this apparent contradiction, the best is that adopted by Baumgarten, Lange, Wordsworth, Gloag, etc., which explains Luke's account in this chap. ix. thus:

The companions of Saul heard *the sound* of the words, while in Paul's account (chap. xxii. 9) 'his companions did not understand what was spoken;' or in other words, Saul received a clear impression of what was being spoken, whilst those with him received only an indefinite one. Once in the Gospel history a similar phenomenon is recorded by St. John xii. 28, 29, when there came a voice from heaven answering Jesus: 'I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.' Three classes of hearers are here spoken of: those who believed recognised the glorious voice and understood the words; others with less faith and love said it was an angel which spoke to Him; while to the multitude in general the voice was only as though it thundered.

Ver. 8. **And when his eyes were opened.** When Saul rose up, probably after some interval, and opened his eyes, he found he was blind from the effects of that gleaming light into which he had gazed for a short space. He himself tells us that he was blinded by the light which shone from heaven: 'I could not see for the glory of that light' (chap. xxii. 11).

**He saw no man.** He could discern none of the familiar faces of his companions, because he was now blind. The reading of the older mss. is even stronger: 'He saw nothing.'

**And they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus.** 'Thus came Saul into Damascus, not as he had expected, to triumph in an enterprise on which his soul was set, to brave all difficulties and dangers, to enter into houses and carry off prisoners to Jerusalem; but he passed himself like a prisoner beneath the gateway, and through the colonnades of the street called "Straight," where he saw not the crowd of those who gazed on him. He was led by the hands of others, trembling and helpless, to the house of Judas, his dark and solitary lodging' (Conybeare and Howson).

Ver. 9. **And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink.** Augustine writes how Saul was blinded that his heart might be enlightened with an inner light. Then, when other things were unseen by him, he kept gazing on Jesus; so piercing, so deep was his remorse, that during this time he neither ate nor drank. 'He could have no communion with Christians, for they had been terrified by the news of his approach, and the unconverted Jews could have no true sympathy with his present state of mind. He fasted and prayed in silence; the recollections of his early years, the passages of the ancient Scriptures which he had never understood, the thoughts of his own cruelty and violence, the memory of the last looks of Stephen,—all these things crowded into his mind during the three days of solitude, and we may imagine one feeling above all others in possession of his heart, the feeling suggested by Christ's words, "Why persecutest thou Me?"' (Conybeare and Howson).

*The Visit of Ananias to the Blinded Saul, 10-19.*

Ver. 10. **And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias.** It is certain, from the particular description of Saul in ver. 11, 'One called Saul of Tarsus,' that Ananias did not know him personally. There is nothing positively known of Ananias, except what we read here and in chap. xxii. 12. He seems to have been one of those upright Jews early converted to the faith

of Jesus, and who, after his conversion, was ever zealous in leading a godly life according to the law, and was on that account held in high esteem by the Jewish inhabitants of Damascus. It is merely a tradition which speaks of him as one of the seventy disciples, and which, professing to relate the details of his later life, describes him as subsequently Bishop of Damascus, and eventually a martyr. The name Ananias (Hananiah) is a pure Hebrew one, and is often found in Old Testament history (see Ezra x. 28; Jer. xxviii. 1; Dan. i. 6).

**To him said the Lord.** The Lord who here appears to Ananias is not God the Father, but Jesus Christ. In ver. 13, Ananias refers to 'Thy saints;' and in ver. 14 to 'all calling on Thy name;' and in ver. 17, in his visit to the blinded Saul, he tells him 'how the Lord, *euen Jesus*, hath sent him that he (Saul) might receive his sight.'

**In a vision.** Whether the vision came to Ananias when he was in a dream or awake, cannot be determined. We know too little of the laws which regulate the rare communications of the higher spiritual world with us men. These words: 'Arise, and go into the street,' etc., simply direct him to leave his home, and proceed to a certain spot where he could find Saul.

Ver. 11. **The street which is called Straight.** In the time when the events related in the 'Acts' took place, 'the main thoroughfare of Damascus was the street called "Straight," so called from its running in a direct line from the eastern to the western gate. It was a mile long. It was a hundred feet wide, and divided by Corinthian columns into three avenues. . . . Remains of the colonnades and gates may still be traced; but time has destroyed every trace of their original magnificence. At present the street, instead of the lordly proportions which once called forth the stranger's admiration, has been contracted by successive encroachments into a narrow passage more resembling a by-lane than the principal avenue of a noble city. At a little distance from the west gate is still shown the house of Judas; it is a grotto or cellar considerably under the general surface. Farther along, and near the eastern gate, you turn up a narrow lane to the left, when you come to the house of Ananias, which is also a grotto' (Lewin's *Life of St. Paul*).

**Of Tarsus.** 'No mean city.' It was the most important of all the Cilician cities, and the acknowledged metropolis. Tarsus was originally of great extent, and was built on both sides of the river Cydnus, and from its consisting of two distinct wings, divided by the Cydnus, took the plural name 'Tarsoi,' *the wings*. Its coins tell us the story of its greatness through the long series of years which intervened between Xerxes and Alexander; and at the time when Saul lived under the Roman Government, it bore the title of metropolis, and was ruled by its own citizens, under its own laws. Tarsus at this time was a famous university, and many of the most celebrated teachers at Rome had received their education in this distant Cilician city. It still exists under its old name 'Tersos,' and though its former fame and prosperity have long departed from it, it still possesses some 30,000 inhabitants (see Conybeare and Howson's *St. Paul*, chap. ii., and Lewin's *St. Paul*, chap. v.).

**For, behold, he prayeth.** This fact of Saul's praying seems mentioned by the Lord to reassure

**Ananias.** The 'persecutor' was praying to the God of the 'persecuted.' So the Lord's servant might surely look for a favourable reception even from the famous inquisitor Saul.

**Ver. 12. Hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias.** The Lord, in relating to Ananias the purport of a vision which Saul had seen, especially mentioned, not *that Saul had seen thee*, but *a man named Ananias*. We may thus conclude positively that Saul and Ananias were previously unknown to each other.

**Ver. 13. Lord, I have heard by many of this man.** The terrible notoriety acquired by the inquisitor Saul is shown by the answer of Ananias. His words exhibit astonishment, and some little hesitation and timidity. He speaks openly and with childlike trust to his Lord, to whom he was evidently accustomed to open his whole heart. 'Lord,' he seems to say, 'is it possible that I should be sent on a mission of mercy to the chief enemy of Thy people?'

**Thy saints.** This is the first time that we find this famous name applied to the followers of the Crucified. 'We have hitherto found them styled "disciples," "believers," "brethren." Christians are called "saints" in the New Testament in three senses:—(a) Generally as members of a visible and local community devoted to God's service, and as such united in a common outward profession of faith; (b) more specifically as members of a spiritual community; and (c) in many cases as having personal and individual sanctity. The term probably always hints at the idea of a higher moral life imparted by Christ' (see Bishop Ellicott on Eph. i. 1, and on Phil. i. 1).

**Ver. 14. Here he hath authority.** No doubt Ananias and the saints at Damascus had received intimation from the Jerusalem brethren of Saul's mission to their city.

**Ver. 15. But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way.** The Lord here repeats His command, and calms the troubled mind of Ananias, by telling him that the well-known persecutor had been chosen

in the counsels of Eternity to advance in a strange way His great cause.

**He is a chosen vessel.** The idea, though not the word (here used for vessel), is an Old Testament one: the clay in the potter's hand to mould or to mar, as it seemed good to the potter; the clay to be fashioned, as it pleased the potter, into vessels of honour or dishonour, as in Jer. xviii. 4; Isa. xlv. 9, 11.

The words here used by the Lord to Ananias, speaking of Saul as 'a chosen vessel,' were no doubt repeated by Ananias to Saul, who, in after days, often uses the same imagery (see Rom. ix. 21-23; 2 Cor. iv. 7; 2 Tim. ii. 20, 21).

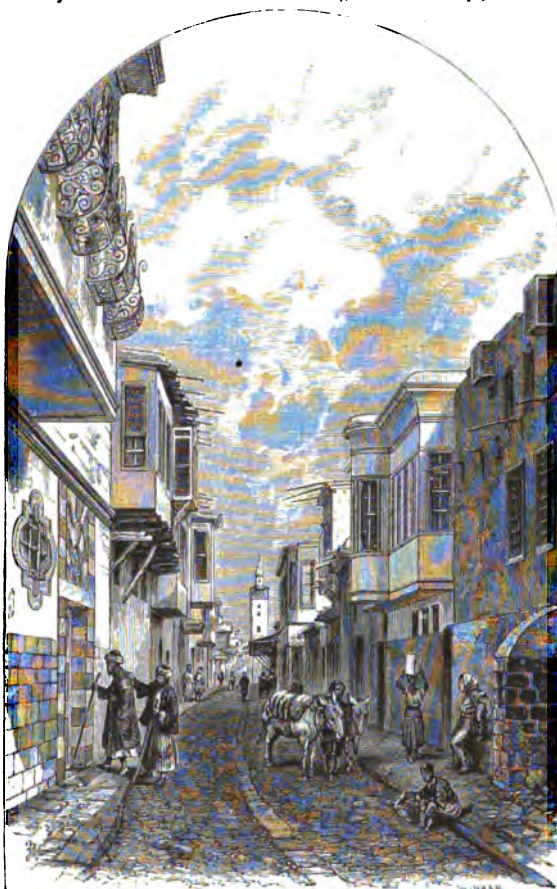
**To bear my name before the Gentiles.** This especially was to be the chief work of the God-appointed missionary. How clearly 'Paul' subsequently saw that this was his great and special duty, his whole life-work shows us; his words too, as in Gal. i. 15, 16. To this mighty end, viz. *the giving light to the Gentile world* hitherto shrouded in clouds and thick darkness, Paul and the martyred Stephen were the first to recognise that the whole Jewish scheme was subservient, was but the preparation for it.

**Kings.** Saul fulfilled this when he appeared before King Agrippa II. and Queen Bernice at Cæsarea, when he stood before the Emperor Nero at Rome, when he pleaded before the tribunals of the Roman governors Sergius Paulus, Gallio, Felix, and Festus.

**The children of Israel.** It was

Paul's custom *first*, we know, ever to tell the story of the redemption to the children of Israel in every city where there was a synagogue or congregation of the chosen people.

**Ver. 16. For I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.** As in chap. xx. 23, when, in his farewell address at Ephesus, he tells the elders of the Church how the Holy Ghost was witnessing in every city that bonds and afflictions were awaiting him (see also chap. xx. 25 and xxi. 11). The more acutely an apostle suffered for the glory of his Master's name, the more ardently he toiled for his Master's cause. Nor did these



Street called Straight.



sufferings come upon these devoted men unawares; they had the inward witness of the Holy Ghost that such a lot surely awaited them: they may not, and this was Paul's experience, have been able to foresee the exact nature, or to foretell the place and circumstances of the moment of bitter trial, but the suffering seems generally before it came to have flung its dark shadow over the life of men like Paul and his companions. In this particular, in some degree, they resembled their blessed Master in their foreknowledge of the bitter cup of suffering which would, sooner or later, be presented to them to drain to the dregs.

Ver. 17. **And Ananias went his way.** The hesitation, the doubts and fears of Ananias, the Jewish Christian, and his subsequent visit and complete acceptance of the persecutor Saul as a brother saint chosen by the Master for a great and mighty work, are well illustrated by an interesting and beautiful passage in that ancient apocryphal book, the Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs, written most probably very early in the second century between A.D. 100 and A.D. 130 by a Christian Jew, a believer in Jesus, but still zealous for the law of Moses and the traditions of Israel. In the mouth of the dying patriarch Benjamin, the writer puts the following prophecy, which gives a fair idea of the estimation in which the work and labours of Paul were held by the orthodox school of rigid Jewish Christians: 'I shall no longer be called a ravening wolf on account of your ravages [referring to Gen. xlix. 27], but a worker of the Lord, distributing goods to those who work that which is good. And there shall arise from my seed in after times one beloved of the Lord, hearing His voice, enlightening with new knowledge all the Gentiles . . . and till the consummation of the ages, shall he be in the congregations of the Gentiles, and among their princes, as a strain of music in the mouth of all. And he shall be inscribed in the Holy Books, both his work and his word, and he shall be chosen of God for ever.' A very different view of the work of the great Gentile Apostle Paul was taken, as we shall see, very early in the Church's history by another Jewish Christian school, which, however, soon parted company with the orthodox Church.

**Brother Saul.** The words of the Master in the vision had done their work with Ananias. He at once proceeded to the house indicated to him in the vision, and going up to the dreaded inquisitor, now blind and humbled, greeted him with love and tenderness as one of the brotherhood of Jesus, and told him he was charged by the One who appeared to him in the way to Damascus to restore his sight, and to bestow upon him the gift of the Holy Ghost.

**That appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest.** Here Ananias directly refers to the appearance of the glorified Jesus to Saul 'in the way.' These and similar declarations are important (see note on ver. 3), as in later days Paul, in speaking of the evidences, seems to have attached the deepest importance to the fact that he had *seen* the Lord (see I Cor. ix. 1, xv. 8).

Ver. 18. **There fell from his eyes as it had been scales.** A good deal has been written on the nature of the injury which Saul's eyes had suffered. The blinding glare of the light from heaven which surrounded the glorified Jesus had destroyed the sight, and now it was miraculously restored. Whether or not some scaly substance which had spread over his eyes fell off at the com-

mand of Ananias, is of little importance. We know *after* the Lord met him, and appeared to him in the way near Damascus, the eyes of Saul were sightless. We know, too, *after* Ananias, acting on the Lord's command, had laid his hands on him, the power of seeing returned to the sightless eyes.

**And was baptized.** Most likely in the house of Judas, where Saul was staying. Damascus is abundantly supplied with water. At this day, the Barada (the Abana of the Old Testament) runs directly through the city, supplying the cisterns, baths, and fountains; all the better houses have a reservoir in their court, or stand beside a natural or artificial stream.

The motives which led to the conversion of St. Paul have been often inquired into. Jew and Gentile unbelievers have again and again sought to discover an earthly motive for the change which so suddenly passed over Saul the Pharisee, whose words and works more than any other mere man's have influenced the fortunes of Christianity. These inquiries date from the earliest times. Epiphanius mentions an old story current among the Ebionites, an heretical sect of Judaizing Christians of the second century, which relates how Saul first became a Jew that he might marry the high priest's daughter, and then became the antagonist of Judaism, because the high priest deceived him. The charge that he was a fanatic or an impostor is a favourite one in all times among the enemies of the faith of Jesus. It is surely impossible to entertain for a moment the idea that he was a fanatic, when we read his letters, and his story in these 'Acts,' and consider fairly his calmness, his wisdom, his prudence, his humility. It is still more impossible to conceive that he changed his religion for mere selfish purposes.

Was he moved by the ostentation of learning? He cast aside in a moment all that he had learned from Gamaliel and the great Jewish doctors, after so many years of patient study, and took up the teaching of the unknown Rabbi of Nazareth and His untaught followers.

Was it love of rule which induced him to throw off his old allegiance? He abdicated in a moment the great power which he possessed as a rising and favourite leader of a dominant party in the nation, for a precarious influence over a flock of sheep driven to the slaughter, whose chief Shepherd had been put to a shameful death but a little time before, and all that he could hope from his change was to be marked out in a particular manner for the same fate.

Was it love of wealth? Whatever might be his worldly possessions at the time, he joined himself to those who were for the most part poor, and among whom he would frequently have to minister to his own necessities, and to the necessities of those about him, with the labour of his own hands. Was it the love of fame? His prophetic power must have been greater than that ever possessed by mortal man, if he could look beyond the shame and scorn which then rested on the servants of a crucified Master, to that glory with which Christendom now surrounds the memory of St. Paul.

If, then, the conversion of this man be the act neither of a fanatic nor of an impostor, to what was it due? He himself often answers the question: *It arose from a miraculous appearance of Christ.* It must be remembered, on this occasion, he was accompanied with others. The time was 'mid-

day,' the scene a public and much frequented highway. No attempted explanation has ever yet thrown the least doubt upon the plain unvarnished story which Paul told so often to account for the change in his life, viz. that Jesus of Nazareth, the Crucified, the Risen One, showed Himself to Paul when on his way to Damascus, and spoke with him face to face, eye to eye (see Conybeare and Howson, *St. Paul*, chap. iii.).

Ver. 19. **Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus.** The writer in this portion of his history of the 'acts of Paul' is very brief. Paul, in his Galatian Epistle (i. 16-18), tells how, shortly after his conversion, he went into Arabia, then returned to Damascus, and after a space of three years went up to Jerusalem to see Peter and the older apostles. In this passage of the 'Acts' the Arabian visit is not mentioned (see note on ver. 22), but several distinct periods of time are alluded to:—(a) Vers. 19-21. *Certain days*, a period immediately succeeding his conversion, when he preached in the Damascus synagogue; (b) Ver. 23. *After that many days were fulfilled*, a much longer period, which probably included two years or more; (c) Vers. 24-26. The close of this more extended period, when the hatred of the Jews compelled him finally to quit Damascus, when he went to Jerusalem. On the question of the Arabian journey referred to in Gal. i. 17, considerable doubt exists as to the meaning of the word 'Arabia.' From the time when the word 'Arabia' was first used by any of the writers of Greece and Rome, it has always been a term of vague and uncertain import.

Sometimes it includes Damascus; sometimes it ranges over Lebanon itself, and extends even to the borders of Cilicia (see Conybeare and Howson, *St. Paul*, chap. iii.). Ewald suggests that the word Damascus (ver. 19), used by the writer of the 'Acts,' includes this residence in 'Arabia' as in a part of the Damascene district or territory, the name of the capital city being used as including all the territory or district of Damascus.

It is, however, possible that Saul, after the first excitement wrought by his conversion had in some measure passed away, longed for solitude, for a time of meditation before setting out on his great life's work, and in the stillness of the Arabian desert, near the Red Sea, the well-known desert of the wanderings of his fathers, sought and found opportunity for solitary communion with God.

*Saul at Damascus.—He goes to Jerusalem.—Bar-nabas brings him to Apostles there, 19-30.*

Ver. 20. **He preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God.** According to the best Greek mss., this should be '*He preached Jesus,*' etc. As Paul tells us in chap. xxvi. 19, he was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, but showed first to them at Damascus, and straightway preached in the synagogues. With the vision of the risen Jesus ever before him, his first work was to show his countrymen that *Jesus*, whom the high priest and Sanhedrim crucified in Jerusalem, was the Son of God. The orthodox Jewish schools, in which Saul the Pharisee had been brought up, all allowed that Christ, the Messiah, the Anointed One, when He should appear, would be the 'Son of God.' What they positively denied was, that the crucified Jesus was the 'Son of God.' Now Saul, the persecutor, in broad daylight had seen this crucified Jesus glorified and transfigured; his

first and chiefest work then was to tell out to his countrymen this great truth.

**The Son of God.** This was one of the Jewish titles of Messiah. So Nathanael (John i. 49) addresses Christ, 'Rabbi, Thou art the *Son of God*; Thou art the King of Israel'; so Peter (Matt. xvi. 16), 'Thou art Christ, the *Son of the living God*.'

Ver. 21. **But all that heard him were amazed.** The Jews were astonished; they knew the position he had held at Jerusalem; they knew the object of his visit to Damascus; and now they saw him using all his great powers to defend and advance the cause he had come to destroy.

Ver. 22. **But Saul increased the more in strength.** Dean Alford regards these as the only words under which can lie concealed the journey to Arabia. His note on this verse is a striking one: 'Paul mentions this journey with no obscure hint that to it was to be assigned the reception by him of the Gospel which he preached, and such a reception would certainly give rise to the great accession of power here recorded. . . . The omission of any mention of this journey here can only arise from one or two causes:—(1) Whether Paul himself were the source of the narration or some other narrator, the *intentional passing over it as belonging more to his personal history than to that of his ministry*. (2) On the supposition of Paul not having been the source of the narrative, the *narrator having not been aware of it*. In either case this expression (increased the more in strength) seems one very likely to have been used—(1) if the omission was intentional, to record a remarkable accession of power to Saul's ministry without particularising whence or how it came; (2) if it was unintentional, as a simple record of that which was observed in him, but of which the source was to the narrator unknown.'

**Proving that this is the very Christ.** Literally, bringing together, showing the connection between the words of the Old Testament prophets and the life and work of Jesus of Nazareth.

Ver. 23. **After that many days were fulfilled.** Some three years probably had now elapsed since the day when Ananias had restored sight to the blinded Pharisee leader; the Damascus preaching and the Arabian journey and sojourn had filled up the period.

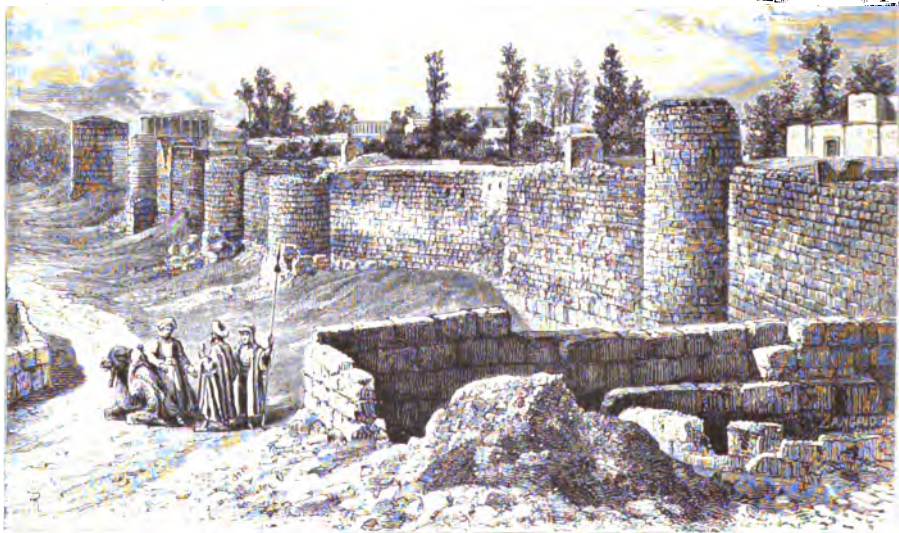
**The Jews took counsel to kill him.** Saul's great learning and ability made him a most formidable adversary in argument. In bygone years they had murdered at Jerusalem the brilliant Hellenist scholar and orator Stephen (see Acts vii.). They now determined to rid themselves of this new and dreaded defender of the faith of Jesus of Nazareth. Chrysostom, in one of his homilies on the 'Acts,' remarks: 'They thought they were rid of argument in such questions in getting rid of Stephen; but they found another more earnest than Stephen.' Mr. Lewin (*St. Paul*, chap. v. observes 'that the present posture of affairs at Damascus offered a favourable opportunity; had the city been subject to Roman jurisdiction, the Jews could not without the fiat of the procurator or prefect have deprived any man of life. But Aretas (see 2 Cor. xi. 32), to whose kingdom of Petra Damascus now belonged, was less careful of public liberties, and in order to conciliate the Jews he had invested their council and chief officer, called the Ethnarch, with supreme power over their own people. A capital charge was therefore made



against Saul, and the Ethnarch, as the representative of the Jewish nation, issued a warrant for his apprehension. The gates of Damascus were watched by the Jews day and night to prevent his escape. Saul, as inflexible in the defence of the Gospel as before, through ignorance he had been furious against it, was willing, we cannot doubt, to lay down his life for his creed; but Providence had destined him for many a long year to stand forth as the great champion of the Church, and to carry its standard triumphantly into far remoter regions. The plot against his life was divulged, and the disciples took him, and at midnight let him down through the window of one of the houses built upon the wall. . . . The traditional window through which St. Paul was let down was some years ago demolished by a fanatic Mohammedan.'

Ver. 26. **And when Saul was come to Jerusalem.** What must have been Saul's feelings when, after three years' absence, he first saw the walls and towers of the Holy City again? He had

left Jerusalem as the powerful commissioner of the Sanhedrim council, armed with full powers to root up the heresy spread by the followers of Jesus. He returned to the capital poor, despised, a proscribed outlaw, his brilliant earthly prospects blasted, only burning to preach the Name of the Crucified, whose devoted followers he had once persecuted with so bitter, so relentless a hostility. 'He might,' suggests Howson (*St. Paul*), 'have again, as he approached the city gates, trodden the very spot where he had so exultantly assisted in the death of Stephen; and he entered then perfectly willing, were it God's will, to be dragged out through them to the same fate. He would feel a peculiar tie of brotherhood to that martyr, for he could not now be ignorant that the same Jesus, who in such glory had called him, had but a little while before appeared in the same glory to reassure the expiring Stephen. The ecstatic look and words of the dying saint now came fresh upon his memory with their real meaning.'



Wall of Damascus.

**He assayed to join himself to the disciples, but they were afraid of him.** His great object was to see and to converse with Peter, as he tells us years after in the Galatian Epistle: 'After three years I went up to Jerusalem to visit Peter' (Gal. i. 18). No doubt the story of the strange conversion of the great Pharisee persecutor at Damascus long ago had reached Jerusalem; but then a considerable period of silence (between two and three years) had intervened, during which time Saul was in retirement and solitude in 'Arabia.' The Jerusalem Church, therefore, must have been in a state of great uncertainty and perplexity as to the intentions of their ancient and bitter enemy. Hackett suggests, 'The sudden appearance of Voltaire in a circle of Christians, claiming to be one of them, would have been something like this return of Saul to Jerusalem as a professed disciple.'

Ver. 27. **But Barnabas took him.** Barnabas, a Levite of the island of Cyprus, early a disciple of Christ, and, according to Eusebius and Clement

of Alexandria, one of the 'seventy,' in the first days after the resurrection held a prominent place in the little Church of Christ. We hear of him as one of the wealthy brethren who sold their land, and gave the price to the apostles for the use of the society (Acts iv. 36, 37). His influence seems to have been very great in the first councils of the believers in Jesus: a word of his changed the mind of the leaders of the community in regard to the convert Saul of Tarsus. Subsequently associated with Saul, being specially pointed out by the Holy Ghost for the missionary work, he was with him solemnly ordained by the Church, and in the council of Jerusalem (Acts xv.) the two were specially recognised as apostles of the Gentiles. The *Clementine Homilies* relate that Barnabas was a disciple of the Lord Himself, and assign to him the conversion of Clement of Rome. The *Recognitions* even assert that he preached at Rome during the lifetime of the Lord. There is a well-known epistle which bears the honoured

name of Barnabas; but although the epistle is undoubtedly the work of the first age of Christianity, and writers of great weight like Clement of Alexandria and Jerome identify the author with the fellow-labourer of St. Paul, still, the best scholars hesitate to attribute this writing which bears his name to Barnabas the apostle.

Brought him to the apostles, viz. to Peter and James, as we learn from Gal. i. 18, 19, where Paul, mentioning how during that visit to Jerusalem he abode with Peter, writes: 'Other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother.' The other members of the apostolic body were at this time most probably absent from the city.

Ver. 29. **And disputed against the Grecians.** These Grecians or Hellenists were Jews who, in the ordinary intercourse of life, used the Greek language (see note on Acts vi. 1). It has been suggested that these disputes were probably held in the same Cilician synagogue at Jerusalem, of which Saul in old days had been so distinguished a Rabbi, and where he held his famous disputation with Stephen, the martyr deacon.

Ver. 30. **Which when the brethren knew, they brought him down to Cæsarea.** The writer of the 'Acts' tells us, it was in consequence of the enmity of the Jews, who feared the able and powerful arguments of their former associate, that Paul departed from Jerusalem. Years later, however, Paul himself assigns another reason for his leaving the Holy City: 'It came to pass, that, when I was come again to Jerusalem, while I prayed in the Temple, I was in a trance; and saw Him saying unto me, Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem: for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me. . . . Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles' (Acts xxii. 17-21). It is not unlikely that, in spite of the dangerous hostility of the Jews which threatened his life, Saul in his enthusiasm would have remained in the city had he not received, as he tells us, a direct warning from heaven.

To Tarsus. There, and in the district of which Tarsus was the chief city, Saul remained until summoned to Antioch by Barnabas for other and grander work (Acts xi. 25). We have no record of his labours during this period, the duration of which has been variously estimated. Howson (*St. Paul*) suggests 'that, in the synagogues of his native city, Saul was neither silent nor unsuccessful. In his own family one may well imagine that some of those Christian kinsmen whose names are handed down to us (Rom. xvi. 7, 11, 21), possibly his sister, the playmate of his childhood, and his sister's son, who afterwards saved his life (Acts xxiii. 17-23), were by his exertions gathered into the fold of Christ.'

Ver. 31. **Then had the churches rest.** In the most ancient MSS. the singular form 'Church' is found, and there is a reason for the writer of the 'Acts' preferring 'Church' to 'churches.' Here he is viewing the various congregations scattered through the whole length and breadth of the Holy Land as one body joined together with an external bond of union,—the apostles, united by an internal bond, the Holy Ghost, and Christ the One Head.

This general picture of the Church embraces most of the time which had elapsed since the conversion of Saul. Various reasons had conduced to this peace which the Church then enjoyed. The conversion and consequent silence of the chief persecutor, Saul, no doubt for a time paralyzed

the counsels of the Sanhedrim in their active measures against the followers of Jesus. The Jewish rulers had also of late other and more pressing dangers to their faith to confront. The Proconsul of Syria, Petronius, wished to introduce the statue of the infamous Emperor Caligula into the Temple of Jerusalem, and for a time there was danger of a general revolt against the Roman power. Caligula's death put an end to the attempt.

**And were edified.** That is, kept advancing in the inner religious life. Two consequences are represented as resulting from this period of rest and peace enjoyed by the churches of the Holy Land:—(1) The 'spiritual life of the individual members was deepened; (2) the numbers of the several congregations were increased.

**Walking in the fear of the Lord.** A very common Hebrew expression, denoting a habitual course of conduct regulated as far as possible upon principles likely to find favour and acceptance with God. See Isa. ii. 5: 'O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the Lord.'

**And in the comfort of the Holy Ghost.** The exact sense of the Greek word translated by 'comfort' is a little doubtful. Perhaps the best and fullest meaning here would be, 'the power of consolatory discourse conferred by the Holy Spirit on those who preached.' During the time of peace and quiet, the number of believers was continually receiving additions; while the spiritual life of the individual members was being deepened, as they lived a life as though ever in the Lord's presence, their faith being strengthened by the words of Divine comfort which the Holy Ghost kept putting into the minds of their preachers.

*Certain Acts of St. Peter, ix. 32-xi. 18.*

Ver. 32. **And it came to pass, as Peter passed throughout all quarters.** In the early chapters of the 'Acts,' the writer has given us the details of many circumstances of the life and work of the first chief of the apostles. After the appointment of Stephen, we hear for a long time little or nothing of Peter; but this silence must not lead us to suppose that in the period which succeeded the death of Stephen, some three or more years, Peter in any way occupied a less prominent position than heretofore in the growing Church of Jesus. The plan of the writer of the 'Acts' did not after the first years require a detailed account of Peter's work and preaching; but now the time had come when a new starting-point in the life of the Church of Jesus was to be made. The 'society,' which now numbered in its ranks many thousand converts from Judaism, in the Holy Land, Syria, and perhaps even in more distant countries, was to be freed for ever from the trammels with which the Mosaic laws, and the traditionary customs and rites which had grown up in the course of ages round it, had hitherto shackled it. The command, 'Go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel' (Matt. x. 6; see, too, Acts xiii. 46), had been literally complied with, and the new era of the missions of the followers of Jesus to the Gentile world was immediately to commence.

The human instrument of this startling change of policy in the 'society' was Peter, hitherto the acknowledged head of the Church of Jerusalem. The writer of the 'Acts' takes up the history of Peter at this juncture, and tells us how, in the course of an official circuit of visiting the various

Palestinian churches during this interval of freedom from persecution alluded to (ver. 30 and note), he came to the Roman city of Cæsarea, where the events which led to the permanent enlargement of the borders of the Church took place. The circumstances which happened at Lydda and Joppa, —places which he visited in the course of this circuit,—may be looked upon as examples of many similar unrelated instances in the great apostle's early career. They are here recounted in detail, as taking place in the course of the journey which ended in the remarkable and momentous visit to Cæsarea.

It is most probable that this official circuit of Peter took place during St. Paul's residence in Tarsus (see note on ver. 30), after his departure from Jerusalem, and his intercourse with Peter.

Chrysostom observes on this journey of the great apostle: 'As the commander of an army, he went about inspecting the ranks (to see) which part was

compact, which in good order, which required his presence.'

**Came down also to the saints which dwell at Lydda.** Lydda was a city of considerable size, about a day's journey from Jerusalem. It was, previous to the fall of Jerusalem, A.D. 70, the seat of a very famous Jewish school. St. George, the patron saint of England, was a native of Lydda. In the Mohammedan tradition, the gate of this city will be the scene of the final combat between Christ and antichrist. It was ruined in the Jewish war, but was subsequently rebuilt by the Romans, when it received the name of Diospolis, 'City of Zeus' (Jupiter).

In the fourth century it became the seat of a well-known bishopric; it occupied a prominent place in the wars of the Crusaders, who rebuilt the city and strongly fortified it. The new name under which it was known by the Romans, and in early Christian story, has, as is so often the case



Lydda.

in Palestine, disappeared; and the modern town, or rather large village, which with its tall minaret is seen by the traveller passing over the plain from Joppa to Ramleh on the old road between Jerusalem and Cæsarea, is known by its ancient name *Lidd* or *Ludd*. It was the *Lod* of the Old Testament (Ezra ii. 33).

Ver. 33. **A certain man named Æneas.** From the name, which is Greek, *Ænēas* (not to be confounded with the name of the Trojan hero *Ænēas*), the palsied man was probably a Hellenistic Jew.

Ver. 34. **And Peter said unto him, Jesus Christ maketh thee whole.** The language of Peter to the palsied sufferer is very different from his Master's in similar cases. The disciple performed his miracle of mercy in the name and power of Jesus Christ. The Redeemer, on the other hand, commanded with Kingly Majesty in such terms as, 'I will, be thou clean;' 'Take up thy bed and walk;' 'Damsel, I say unto thee, Arise;' 'Lazarus, come forth.'

**Arise, and make thy bed.** 'That bed of thine, which hitherto others have made for thee, poor crippled one, from henceforth, restored by the power of my Master, Jesus, make for thyself.'

Ver. 35. **Saron.** The Old Testament 'Sharon,' that beautiful plain extending along the coast of Palestine for some thirty miles between Joppa and Cæsarea. Its singular beauty and fertility are frequently noticed in the poetical books of the Old Testament. So Isaiah, who (xxxv. 2) writes of 'the glory of Lebanon, and the excellency of Carmel and Sharon;' and King Solomon in the Song of Songs (ii. 1) tells us of 'the rose of Sharon and the lily of the valleys.' In the chronicles of the Crusades, 'the forest of Saron' was the scene of one of the most romantic adventures of Richard.

Ver. 36. **Now there was at Joppa.** Joppa (Hebrew, *Japho*), a word signifying 'beauty,' the port of Jerusalem in the days of Solomon, as it has been ever since. It belonged to the tribe of Dan

(Josh. xix. 46), and was originally a Philistine city. Josephus tells us it once belonged to the Phœnicians; and a tradition exists that on the rocks of Joppa, Andromeda was bound and exposed to the monster. At Joppa, in the days of Solomon, the cedar wood and materials for the Jerusalem Temple were landed. It was at this seaport that the prophet Jonah 'took ship to flee from the presence of his Maker.' At the period referred to in this chapter, Joppa was a flourishing city, but was ruined in the Jewish war with Rome. We hear frequently of this seaport in the time of the Crusades. Godfrey de Bouillon, Richard of England, and St. Louis of France, in turn resided there for a considerable period. It is still the principal harbour of Palestine, but it is in a decaying state, containing only about 4000 inhabitants. The house of Simon the tanner, where Peter lodged, purports to be shown still.

**A certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas.** The name Tabitha is an Aramaic form of the Hebrew word signifying 'gazelle,' the gazelle being regarded by Jews and Arabs as the standard of beauty. It was, with its Greek equivalent 'Dorcas,' a name not uncommon among the Greeks and Hebrews. As at Joppa, a seaport, both the Hebrew and Greek languages were used, it is most likely this woman was known by both names—Tabitha and Dorcas. It is impossible to decide her nationality. She must have been a person of considerable means, and not improbably, from the position she evidently occupied among the disciples of Joppa, belonged to a family of some rank.

**Was full of good works and alms-deeds which she did.** We gather from this brief notice of the life of Dorcas, and from many other incidental allusions in the 'Acts' and Epistles, that the life—recommended by the earliest preachers of Christianity, and certainly led by all the most distinguished members of the society—was eminently a practical and active existence. The disciples seem to have lived, as aforesaid, in the world and among men and women; they mixed in the business and harmless pleasures, and shared in the social intercourse of the day; but at the same time they coloured the old life with a new strange beauty, they adorned it with acts of generosity, self-denying love, with sweet gentle deeds of kindness done to slaves, to helpless ones, to poor sick beings of whose existence the busy restless world had hitherto taken no thought. The life of contemplation, of prayerful meditation, was evidently unknown and unheard of in the Church of the first days; such a life was a necessary development of a later age.

This is not the place to consider the advantages and disadvantages to mankind of the life of the solitary and the recluse—a life which possesses in itself, it cannot be denied, much that is beautiful, and which is by no means without its holy influence on the life and work of the busy world; still the careful and thoughtful student of the words and spirit of Jesus and His disciples, as contained in the writings of the New Testament, is obliged to confess that the monastic type of life was never sketched out or imagined by a Peter, a Paul, a James, or by any of their friends or disciples. The Master's words spoken to His Father on that solemn evening before the day of the Cross, were after all the groundwork of all true Christian theology and life: 'I pray not that

Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil' (John xvii. 15).

**Ver. 37. Whom when they had washed.** Maimonides, quoted by Gloag, says: 'It is the custom in Israel, about the dead and their burial, that when any one is dead, they shut his eyes and wash his body.' The practice of 'washing the dead' was common among the Greeks and the Romans (see Virgil, *Æneid*, vi. 219). Wordsworth calls attention to this account of the dead Dorcas, being the third instance in this book of reference to the decencies of Christian burial. St. Chrysostom, he goes on to say, contrasts the quietness of this laying out of Dorcas with the great lamentation over Stephen (chap. viii. 2). Death, the followers of Jesus had now learnt to regard with greater calmness and joy. See St. Paul's reproof of immoderate grief for the dead in his earliest Epistle (1 Thess. iv. 13-18).

**They laid in an upper chamber,** where the body of the holy dead might rest quietly till Peter came. The message of ver. 38, 'desiring him that he would not delay to come to them,' tells us that the disciples of Joppa hoped much from Peter; they certainly had some dim expectation that the great wonder-working friend of Christ would, like Elijah or Elisha among their fathers, or that far greater One than Elijah or Elisha, whom some of them perhaps had seen, be able to restore to them their loved saint who had been setting so fair and bright an example to the Church at Joppa.

**Ver. 38. Lydda was nigh to Joppa.** About nine or ten miles was the distance of Lydda from Joppa.

**Ver. 39. The coats and garments.** 'Coats,' better translated 'tunics,' the inner clothing, the word rendered 'garments' signifying the outer mantle worn above the tunic.

**Ver. 40. But Peter put them all forth,** following the example of Christ (Mark v. 40), to avoid anything like a crowd of curious spectators in the hushed and solemn death-chamber, at the moment when the soul should return to the body. Elisha, when he raised to life the Shunammite's son (2 Kings iv. 33), did the same thing.

**Kneeled down, and prayed.** So Elijah, when he raised the dead son of the widow of Zarephath, 'cried unto the Lord,' and Elisha, in the case of the Shunammite's son, 'prayed unto the Lord.' Jesus, *without any preceding prayer*, restored to life the son of the widow of Nain and the little daughter of Jairus. In the case of the raising of Lazarus, His action was still more remarkable; *then* He thanked the Father *beforehand* for His power over life and death, so confident was Jesus that, though He had laid aside His robe of glory, He still possessed the keys of death and the grave.

Less than ten years had passed since the Resurrection of Jesus (the scene just related, which happened at Joppa, took place A.D. 40, 41), and already one of the great changes Christianity was to work in the world, had been effected in the rapidly-growing company of believers. A 'new life' had been pointed out to and quietly adopted by the women of the new society. From the first days which succeeded that glad Pentecost morning when the Holy Spirit fell on the twelve, we have noticed (see the short Excursus B. at the end



of chap. v.) the holy influence which the 'sisters in Christ' quietly exercised in the Jerusalem Church. Now at Joppa, the relation of the circumstances which led to the great miracle of Peter, casually tells us that another advance in the position of women as fellow-workers for Jesus, had silently been brought about.

At Joppa, a devoted disciple named Dorcas had apparently organized a band of helpers,—widows, perhaps desolate, friendless, homeless ones,—who assisted her in her works of charity and self-denying love. What was taking place at Joppa in the year '40,' no doubt was taking place in Jerusalem, and in many another centre where the religion of Jesus had gathered together a congregation of believers. In this little band of faithful women gathered together in Joppa by Dorcas, we see the germ of that more elaborately-constituted body of female workers at Ephesus alluded to twenty-five years later by St. Paul (1 Tim. v. 9). It is, indeed, a specially interesting episode this visit of Peter to Joppa, for it is the first and earliest mention of the noble work left by the Redeemer to be done by Christian women. It is the first recital of those splendid services of theirs in the holy cause of charity, the record of which will be found to fill so many of the brightest pages of the book of God when it is opened and read before the great white throne.

#### EXCURSUS.

THE OMITTED WORDS OF VER. 5, 'IT IS HARD FOR THEE TO KICK AGAINST THE PRICKS.'<sup>1</sup>

A peculiar interest is attached to these words. They were uttered by the Risen and Ascended Lord; they have been acknowledged without dispute by the Christian Church from the earliest days as a voice from the glory-throne in heaven. It is therefore to be expected that certain schools of theological thought would endeavour to find in a saying surrounded by so extraordinary a sanctity, an authoritative approval of the views which they advocated.

The metaphor, 'It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks,' was a favourite one in the heathen world; as, for instance:

'With God we may not strive

But to bow down the willing neck,  
And bear the yoke, is wise:  
To kick against the pricks will prove  
A perilous emprise.'<sup>2</sup>

It was frequently used both by Greek and Roman writers. We find it in the works of Pindar, Æschylus, and Euripides, and also in Plautus and Terence.<sup>3</sup> The words do not occur in any known collection of Hebrew Proverbs, but

<sup>1</sup> The words, 'It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks,' occur in the Authorised Version in the account of St. Paul's conversion contained in Acts ix., but all critical editors of the New Testament concur in expunging these words in this first narration of the conversion, as they are not contained in any of the older authorities. But though this was no place for their insertion, there is no shadow of doubt but that the words were uttered by the Lord, for all mss. unite in inserting them in St. Paul's own account of his conversion (Acts xxvi. 14).

<sup>2</sup> See Pindar, *Pyth.* ii. 173 (the transl. is by Plumptre).

<sup>3</sup> See Æsch. *Prom.* 323; *Agamemn.* 1633; Eur. *Bacch.* 791; Plautus, *Truc.* iv. 2. 59; Ter. *Phormio*, i. 2. 27.

probably the same or a similar saying was current among the Jews.

The proverb, no doubt a most ancient one, is derived from oxen at the plough, which, on being pricked with the goad, kick against it, and so cause it to pierce them more severely. Its meaning here is obvious: it was useless, nay injurious, to resist Christ by persecuting His disciples. So St. Augustine (sermon cxvi.): 'Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? I am in heaven, thou art on earth, and yet thou persecutest Me. It is not My head that thou touchest, but it is My members that thou treadest under foot.' Professor Plumptre, however, with great force suggests that Saul had, in a peculiar and especial way, been for some time past 'kicking against the pricks.' 'There had been promptings, misgivings, warnings, which he had resisted and defied. Among the causes of these we may reckon . . . the warning counsel of Gamaliel (chap. v. 34-39), the angel-face of Stephen and the martyr's dying prayer (chap. vi. 15, vii. 60), and the daily spectacle of those who were ready to go to prison and to death rather than to renounce the name of Jesus. In the frenzy of his zeal he had tried to crush these misgivings, and the effort to do so had brought with it discomfort and disquietude, which made him more exceeding mad against the disciples of the Lord.' But this proverb used by the glorified Lord possesses its own peculiar importance—it teaches a great truth. To resist the call of Christ is ever a hard and profitless task; one, too, which is far beyond man's power. Such a course of action must ever end in utter ruin and wreck for the unhappy one who struggles to resist. But hopeless as is such a resistance, certain as is the ruin which follows, the teaching of the passage shows it is possible for any of us to resist the Redeemer's voice, and by this stubborn resistance, not by any means to bar the progress of His kingdom, but to bring misery and destruction upon oneself. We are led to this conclusion by the statement of Acts xxvi. 29, which followed the recital of his meeting with Jesus on his way to Damascus: 'Whereupon . . . I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision.' He might then have been disobedient to this summons of his Lord had he pleased. The call to Saul of Tarsus, then, was no irresistible summons. St. Augustine (sermon clxix.) well puts it: 'Thou art angry, but I pity; why persecutest thou me? For I have no fear of thee that thou shouldst crucify ME a second time; my wish is that thou shouldst know ME, lest thou shouldst slay not ME but thine own self.'

It should be noticed that this utterance of Christ from His throne was made in the old sacred Hebrew tongue. Now Saul, to whom the voice came, was more conversant with Greek than with Hebrew. He seems to have generally adopted Greek as the language in which he conveyed his teaching in eastern as well as in western lands. The proverb, too, was no Hebrew, but a famous and well-known Greek saying. Hence Bengel's comment on the employment of the Hebrew tongue by the voice from heaven, deserves grave attention, even if we hesitate fully to accept his conclusions. 'Hebrew,' he says, 'is Christ's language on earth; His language, too, when speaking from heaven' (see Excursus following chap. xxvi., where this question is fully discussed).





*From photographs.*

JORJA.

## CHAPTER X.

*The History of Cornelius—His Vision at Cæsarea—Trance of St. Peter at Joppa—His Journey to Cæsarea—Baptism of Cornelius.*

- 1 THERE was<sup>1</sup> a certain man in<sup>a</sup> Cæsarea called Cornelius,  
 2 a centurion of the<sup>b</sup> band called the Italian band, A  
 'devout man, and<sup>d</sup> one that feared God with all his house,  
 which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God  
 3 always.<sup>3</sup> 'He saw in<sup>f</sup> a vision evidently,<sup>3</sup> about the ninth hour  
 of the day, 'an angel of God coming in to him, and saying  
 4 unto him, Cornelius. And when he<sup>h</sup> looked on him,<sup>4</sup> 'he was  
 afraid, and said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him,  
 Thy prayers and thine alms<sup>k</sup> are come up<sup>i</sup> for a memorial  
 5 before God. And now send men to<sup>m</sup> Joppa, and call for one  
 6 Simon, whose surname is Peter: He lodgeth with one<sup>n</sup> Simon a  
 tanner, whose house is by the sea-side: 'he shall tell thee what  
 7 thou oughtest to do.<sup>5</sup> And when the angel which spake unto  
 Cornelius<sup>6</sup> was departed, he called two of his<sup>p</sup> household ser-  
 vants,<sup>7</sup> and a 'devout soldier of them that<sup>q</sup> waited on him  
 8 continually;<sup>8</sup> And when he had declared all *these things* unto  
 them, he sent them to Joppa.
- 9 On the morrow, as they went on their journey, and drew  
 nigh unto the city, 'Peter went up upon<sup>r</sup> the house<sup>9</sup> to pray  
 10 about<sup>s</sup> the sixth hour: And he became very hungry, and would  
 have eaten: but while they made ready, he fell into<sup>t</sup> a trance,<sup>10</sup>  
 11 And<sup>u</sup> saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto  
 him, as *it had been* a great sheet knit at the four corners, and  
 12 let down to the earth: Wherein were all *manner of* fourfooted  
 beasts of the earth,<sup>11</sup> and wild beasts,<sup>11</sup> and creeping things,  
 13 and fowls of the air. And there came a voice to him, Rise,  
 14 Peter; kill, and eat. But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for<sup>w</sup> I  
 have never eaten any *thing that is* common or<sup>x</sup> unclean.  
 15 And *the voice* spake unto him again the second time, What  
 16 God hath cleansed, *that* call not thou common. This was

<sup>a</sup> Ver. 24. See ch. viii. 40.  
<sup>b</sup> See Jo. xviii. 3.  
<sup>c</sup> Ver. 7; ch. xxii. 12; 2 Pet. ii. 9 (Gk.).  
<sup>d</sup> Ver. 22. So ver. 35; ch. xiii. 16, 26.  
<sup>e</sup> Ver. 30; ch. xi. 13. See Judg. vi. 12.  
<sup>f</sup> Ver. 17. See ch. xii. 9.  
<sup>g</sup> See ch. xii. 7.  
<sup>h</sup> See Lu. iv. 20.  
<sup>i</sup> See Lu. i. 12.  
<sup>j</sup> Rev. viii. 4 (Gk.). So Dan. x. 12.  
<sup>k</sup> Mat. xxvi. 13; Mk. xiv. 9. So ver. 31; Heb. vi. 10.  
<sup>l</sup> Ch. ix. 36, 43.  
<sup>m</sup> Ch. ix. 43.  
<sup>n</sup> So ver. 22; ch. xi. 14.  
<sup>o</sup> Lu. xvi. 13; Rom. xiv. 4; 1 Pet. ii. 18 in the Gk.  
<sup>p</sup> Ch. viii. 13 (Gk.).  
<sup>q</sup> To ver. 32; ch. xi. 5-14.  
<sup>r</sup> See 2 Sam. xi. 2 (Gk.).  
<sup>s</sup> Ps. lv. 17.  
<sup>t</sup> Ch. xxii. 17.  
<sup>u</sup> So ch. vii. 56. See Ezek. i. 1.  
<sup>v</sup> So Ezek. iv. 14; Dan. i. 8.  
<sup>w</sup> Ver. 28; ch. xi. 8.  
<sup>x</sup> Lev. xi. 2-47, xx. 25; Deut. xiv. 4-20.  
<sup>y</sup> Mat. xv. 11, 18, 20; Mk. vii. 15, 18, 20, 23; Heb. ix. 13 in the Gk.  
<sup>z</sup> Cp. Rom. xiv. 14, 17, 20; 1 Cor. x. 25; 1 Tim. iv. 4; Tit. i. 15.

<sup>1</sup> The older authorities omit 'was; 'render, 'And a certain man in Cæsarea called Cornelius . . . saw in a vision,' etc.

<sup>2</sup> better rendered, 'prayed to God constantly.'

<sup>3</sup> better rendered, 'saw in a vision clearly.'

<sup>4</sup> more accurately, 'when he looked upon him earnestly.'

<sup>5</sup> The older authorities omit the words, 'he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do.'

<sup>6</sup> The older authorities omit 'Cornelius; 'render, 'spake unto him.'

<sup>7</sup> The older authorities omit 'his; 'render, 'two of the household servants.'

<sup>8</sup> omit 'continually.' <sup>9</sup> better, 'went up to the house-top.'

<sup>10</sup> quite literally, 'an ecstasy fell upon him; 'or, according to some of the older authorities, 'an ecstasy happened to him.'

<sup>11</sup> The older authorities omit 'and wild beasts,' and place 'of the earth' after creeping things.'



done thrice: and the vessel was received up again<sup>12</sup> into heaven.

- 17 Now while Peter <sup>a</sup>doubted in himself what *this* <sup>f</sup>vision <sup>a</sup>See Lu ix 7 which he had seen should mean, behold, the men which were sent from Cornelius had made inquiry for Simon's house, and
- 18 <sup>b</sup>stood before <sup>c</sup>the gate, And called, and asked whether Simon, <sup>b</sup>Gk. as ch. xi. 11.
- 19 which was surnamed Peter, were lodged there. While Peter <sup>c</sup>See Lu. xvi. 20. thought on the vision, the spirit said unto him, Behold, <sup>d</sup>three <sup>d</sup>Ver. 7.
- 20 men seek thee: Arise therefore, and get *thee* down, and <sup>e</sup>go <sup>e</sup>Ch. xv. 7-9: Eph. iii. 6. Cp. Jo. xvi. 23.
- 21 with them, <sup>f</sup>doubting nothing: for I have sent them. Then Peter went down to the men which were sent unto him from <sup>f</sup>See Mat. xxi. 21.
- Cornelius; <sup>14</sup> and said, Behold, I am he whom ye seek: what *is*
- 22 the cause wherefore ye are come? And they said, Cornelius the centurion, a just man, and <sup>g</sup>one that feareth God, and <sup>h</sup>of <sup>g</sup>Ver. 2. <sup>h</sup>See ch. vi. 3. <sup>i</sup>See Lu ii. 26.
- good report among all the nation of the Jews, was <sup>i</sup>warned from God by a <sup>k</sup>holy angel to send for thee into his house, and
- 23 <sup>j</sup>to hear words of thee. Then called he them in, and lodged *them*. <sup>k</sup>See Mat. xxv. 31. <sup>l</sup>So ver. 6: ch. xi. 14.
- And on the morrow Peter <sup>15</sup>went away with them, and <sup>m</sup>certain <sup>m</sup>Ver. 45. Cp. ch. xi. 12.
- 24 <sup>n</sup>brethren from Joppa accompanied him. And the morrow <sup>n</sup>See Jo. xxi. 23.
- after* they <sup>16</sup>entered into <sup>o</sup>Cæsarea. And Cornelius waited <sup>o</sup>Ver. 1.
- for them, and had called together his kinsmen and near friends.
- 25 And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and <sup>p</sup>fell down <sup>p</sup>So ch. xvi. 29.
- 26 at *his* feet, and <sup>q</sup>worshipped *him*. But Peter took him up, <sup>q</sup>See Mat. viii. 2.
- 27 saying, Stand up; <sup>r</sup>I myself also am a man. And as he <sup>r</sup>Rev. xix. 10. xxii. 9. So ch. xiv. 15. Cp. Dan. ii. 46.
- talked with him, he went in, and found <sup>s</sup>many *that were* come
- 28 together. And he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an <sup>s</sup>Ver. 24. <sup>t</sup>Pet. iv. 3. in the Gk.
- <sup>t</sup>unlawful *thing* for a man *that is* a Jew <sup>u</sup>to keep company,
- or come unto one of another nation; but <sup>v</sup>God hath showed
- 29 me that *I* should not call any man common or unclean. There- <sup>u</sup>So Jo. iv. 9. xviii. 28: ch. xi. 3: Gal. ii. 12, 14.
- fore came I *unto you* <sup>18</sup>without gainsaying, as soon as I was sent <sup>v</sup>Ver. 15.
- 30 for: I ask therefore for what intent ye have sent for me? And Cornelius said, <sup>w</sup>Four days ago I was <sup>x</sup>fasting <sup>19</sup>until this <sup>w</sup>Vers. 9, 23, 24. <sup>x</sup>See Mat. xvii. 21.
- hour; and at <sup>y</sup>the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and <sup>y</sup>5-e ch. iii. 1.
- 31 behold, <sup>z</sup>a man stood before me in <sup>z</sup>bright clothing, And said, <sup>z</sup>See ch. i. 10. <sup>aa</sup>See ch. i. 10; Lu. xxiii. 11 (Gk.).
- Cornelius, <sup>b</sup>thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are had in
- 32 remembrance in the sight of God. <sup>c</sup>Send therefore to Joppa, <sup>c</sup>Ver. 4. <sup>d</sup>Vers. 5, 6.
- and call hither Simon, whose surname is Peter; <sup>20</sup>he is lodged

<sup>12</sup> *The older authorities read 'straightway' for 'again.'*

<sup>13</sup> *Some of the older authorities omit 'three' before 'men'; one reads 'two men.'*

<sup>14</sup> *The older authorities omit the words, 'which were sent unto him from Cornelius.'*

<sup>15</sup> *The older authorities omit 'Peter,' and insert 'having arisen;,' render, 'having arisen, he went with them.'*

<sup>16</sup> *Some ancient authorities read, 'he entered into,' etc.*

<sup>17</sup> *better, 'raised him up.'*

<sup>18</sup> *omit 'unto you.'*

<sup>19</sup> *Some ancient authorities omit 'fasting;,' the rendering thus would be, 'I was praying at the ninth hour,' etc.*

<sup>20</sup> *literally, 'who is surnamed Peter.'*

- in the house of *one* Simon a tanner by the sea-side: who, when  
 33 he cometh, shall speak unto thee.<sup>31</sup> Immediately therefore I  
 sent to thee; and <sup>d</sup>thou hast well done that thou art come.  
 Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all  
*things* that are commanded thee of God.<sup>32</sup>
- 34 Then Peter <sup>e</sup>opened *his* mouth, and said, Of a truth I per-  
 35 ceive that God is <sup>f</sup>no respecter of persons: But <sup>g</sup>in every  
 nation <sup>h</sup>he that feareth him, and <sup>i</sup>worketh righteousness, is  
 36 accepted<sup>33</sup> with him. <sup>k</sup>The word which<sup>34</sup> God sent unto the  
 children of Israel, preaching <sup>l</sup>peace by Jesus Christ: (<sup>m</sup>he is  
 37 <sup>n</sup>Lord of all:) *That* word, I *say*, ye know,<sup>35</sup> which was pub-  
 lished throughout all Judea, and <sup>o</sup>began from Galilee, after the  
 38 baptism which John preached; How God <sup>p</sup>anointed Jesus of  
 Nazareth<sup>36</sup> with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went  
 about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the  
 39 devil; for <sup>q</sup>God was with him. And we are <sup>r</sup>witnesses of all  
*things* which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in  
 40 Jerusalem; <sup>s</sup>whom they slew and hanged on a tree: Him <sup>t</sup>God  
 41 raised up the third day, and showed him openly; <sup>u</sup>Not to all  
 the people, but unto <sup>v</sup>witnesses chosen before of God, *even* to  
 42 us, <sup>w</sup>who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the  
 dead. And <sup>x</sup>he commanded us to preach unto the people, and  
 to <sup>y</sup>testify that <sup>z</sup>it is he which was <sup>a</sup>ordained of God *to be*  
 43 the Judge <sup>b</sup>of quick and dead. To him give <sup>c</sup>all the prophets  
 witness, that through his name <sup>d</sup>whosoever<sup>37</sup> believeth in him  
 shall receive <sup>e</sup>remission of sins.
- 44 While Peter yet spake these words, <sup>f</sup>the Holy Ghost fell on  
 45 all them which heard the word. And <sup>g</sup>they of the circum-  
 cision which believed were astonished, <sup>h</sup>as many as came with  
 Peter, because that <sup>i</sup>on the Gentiles also was <sup>j</sup>poured out <sup>k</sup>the  
 46 gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them <sup>l</sup>speak with  
 47 tongues, and magnify God. Then <sup>m</sup>answered Peter, Can any  
*man* <sup>n</sup>forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which  
 48 have received the Holy Ghost <sup>o</sup>as well as we? And he <sup>p</sup>com-  
 manded them to be baptized <sup>q</sup>in the name of the Lord.<sup>38</sup>  
 Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.

<sup>a</sup> See ch. v. 31. <sup>f</sup> Ch. xi. 15. See ch. ii. 4. <sup>g</sup> Ver. 23. Cp. ch. xi. 12. <sup>h</sup> So ch. xi. 18. See Mat. viii. 11.  
<sup>i</sup> See ch. ii. 33. <sup>k</sup> See ch. ii. 38. <sup>l</sup> Ch. xix. 6. See ch. ii. 4. <sup>m</sup> Ch. iii. 12, v. 8. See Judg. xviii. 14.  
<sup>n</sup> Ch. viii. 36, xi. 17 in the Gk. <sup>o</sup> Ch. xi. 17, xv. 8, 9; Rom. x. 12. <sup>p</sup> Cp. 1 Cor. i. 14, 17.  
<sup>q</sup> So ch. ii. 38, viii. 16, xix. 5. See Mat. xxviii. 19.

<sup>31</sup> Some ancient authorities omit 'who, when he cometh, shall speak unto thee.'

<sup>32</sup> The older authorities read here, 'of the Lord.'

<sup>33</sup> more accurately rendered, 'is acceptable to him.'

<sup>34</sup> Some ancient authorities omit 'which;'; the rendering then would be, 'God sent the word unto the children of Israel.'

<sup>35</sup> better rendered, 'ye know the word which was published,' etc.

<sup>36</sup> more accurately, 'ye know Jesus of Nazareth, how that God anointed Him,' etc.

<sup>37</sup> more accurately, 'every one who.'

<sup>38</sup> Some ancient authorities read, 'in the name of Jesus Christ.'

The careful comparison of the several parts of this section of the Acts of the Apostles one with another is of great importance. Worked out after the manner of the *Horæ Paulinæ*, it leads to evidential results of considerable value. With the direct narrative are to be compared—(1) The account of Cornelius given by his messengers; (2) Peter's account of his own experience to Cornelius; (3) Cornelius's account, in turn, of his own experience to Peter; (4) Peter's apologetic account at Jerusalem. To fulfil the conditions of the argument drawn from 'undesigned coincidences,' these various sections must be in harmony with one another: yet they must have sufficient variation to suit their several occasions; and those variations must not be contrived: the whole must fit easily and naturally together. These particulars will be noticed as we go on, and the result will be summed up at the close in an *Excursus on the two accounts of the conversion of Cornelius*.

#### *Cæsarea and Cornelius, 1, 2.*

Ver. 1. **There was a certain man.** In the Authorised Version there is no equivalent to the little particle *ἄν*, but this little particle is not without its importance. It serves to connect what we read here with what we read in the latter part of the preceding chapter. The work and miracles of Peter at Lydda and elsewhere were the prepara-



Roman Centurion.

tion for what is now about to be recounted. His residence at Joppa was locally the starting-point for the momentous mission presently to be undertaken. All this sacred history, both in its outward circumstances and in the apostle's personal experience, is arranged on a providential plan.

It is not easy, nor is it necessary, to fix the precise relations as to time between the preaching and acceptance of Christianity among the Gentiles at Antioch, the account of which meets us in the latter part of the eleventh chapter, and that great story of the conversion of Cornelius, which is the

subject of the tenth and the earlier part of the eleventh. The exact chronological order of these events is not of essential moment. When a great providential change is about to occur, premonitory indications may be expected; and if the change is one that affects all mankind, such symptoms may be looked for simultaneously in various places. Reuss gives precedence, in point of time, to the events which occurred at Antioch: and certainly the first Gentile Church was there; the name 'Christian' came into existence there; and Antioch became the Jerusalem of Gentile Christianity. But this priority in time cannot be proved. More will be said on this subject when we come to that part of the history. Meantime it is an undoubted fact that CÆSAREA is set before us as the scene of the bright beginning of that revelation of the 'mystery' of the reception of the Gentiles on equal terms with the Jews, in which St. Paul afterwards so much gloried (Eph. iii. 3-6; Col. i. 26, 27), and our attention is pointedly fixed upon CORNELIUS as the first typical example of Gentile Christendom. We are brought at this part of the history to an event so remarkable, that we must lay emphatic stress both upon the man and the place. They harmonize with and are correlative to one another. Cæsarea is the appointed and proper frame for the portrait of Cornelius.

**In Cæsarea.** Some notice of this place has been already given on the occasion of the first mention of it (viii. 40; see also ix. 30), where Philip the Evangelist is described as arriving there from Azotus, after the conversion of the Ethiopian eunuch. But the importance of Cæsarea in connection with Cornelius is so great that the following circumstances may be added. This city is very conspicuous in the Acts of the Apostles. For instance, not to refer again to what has preceded, St. Paul closed at this place his second and his third missionary journeys (xviii. 22, xxi. 8). To this place he was sent, after the uproar at Jerusalem, that he might be safe, and that he might appear before the governor (xxiii. 23); and from this port he sailed on his voyage to Italy (xxvii. 1). This prominence of Cæsarea in the Acts of the Apostles could not be otherwise, if the history is a true one. It was a city of the utmost importance at this time, partly in connection with the Roman road along the coast, but still more because of its harbour, by which it communicated with all the West. This harbour is said by Josephus to have rivalled that of the Piræus. Its great breakwater may be compared with that of Cherbourg in our own day. Tacitus says that Cæsarea was 'the head of Judæa.' Moreover it was specially a Gentile city. The Jews were relatively less numerous there than in any other part of Palestine. It was a Pagan metropolis in the Holy Land. Above all things it is to be noted that, when Palestine was a Roman province, the governor resided here. Felix and Festus after this date, and, no doubt, Pontius Pilate previously, had their official palace at Cæsarea. Here, too, were the chief quarters of the soldiers, who kept this land in subjection, whether under Herodian kings or under Roman governors. Tholuck (*Die Glaubwürdigkeit der Evangelischen Geschichte*, p. 174) remarks on the presence of the 'Italian cohort' at this place as an indication of the natural truthfulness of the history. And the same remark might be made concerning the presence of the 'Augustan

cohort' in this place (Acts xxvii. 1; see note on that passage). In its very name, as in the character of its buildings, Cæsarea was a reflection of imperial Rome. Thus this city was an expression of the relation of Palestine to the empire, and of the condition of things under which the Gospel was propagated. We should not fail to notice this particular form of the connection between the Holy Land and the Heathen world at large. It was a Gentile capital of Judæa with which we have to do in the Acts of the Apostles. There was something providential, if we may say so, in the fact that Jerusalem never became the Roman capital, but always retained its Hebrew character.

Called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band. In these two verses we have information as to what he was—(1) nationally and officially, and (2) in personal character; and we naturally wish to know all we can about the man who occupies so remarkable a place in the sacred history of the world.

His was a true Roman name, and a very distinguished one. No gens was better known in the Roman annals than the Cornelian. The name of Cornelius probably points to the fact that he was a true-born Italian.

As to his position in life, he was a centurion—a military officer holding a responsible position. It is worth while to remark here, in passing, on the honourable character of all the centurions who come specially before us in the New Testament—two in the Gospels, and two in the Acts. The close connection of the history of the founding of Christianity with military subjects is remarkable and instructive. We have here, in the case of Cornelius, an anticipation of the intimate association of St. Paul with the Roman army. It does not follow from this that war is a good thing. Rather we ought to say that it is a bad thing overruled for good, and made subservient to missionary purposes. In illustration of St. Paul's frequent use of military metaphors, derived from this connection, see especially Eph. vi. 11-18.

The cohort to which Cornelius belonged was the Italic cohort. The phrase *στὴν καλοφύλακιν* may denote a popular appellation of this body of troops (see Acts xxvii. 14). However this may be, the title seems to indicate a cohort of true-born Italians. Wherever other cohorts quartered in Cæsarea or in other parts of Palestine may have been recruited, this was recruited in Italy. The Latin character of the corps is strongly marked; and this is in harmony with all the circumstances of the case. Gloag and Alexander compare the position of this cohort in Judæa with that of a British regiment in India, as distinguished from Sepoy or native troops. Gloag suggests that it may have been 'the body-guard of the Roman governor,' and valuable to him as 'formed of troops on whom he could depend in disputes with the natives.' But here this useful commentator is in error. Judæa was not at this time a province under a Roman governor, such as Pilate, or Felix, or Festus, but a kingdom under Herod Agrippa I. (see xii. 1, and especially xii. 19). This fact has some bearing on the question whether the Italic cohort was a detached body of troops, or a part of a legion. The former is more likely. The relation of the Roman army to petty dependent sovereigns under the empire is full of interest, and derives some illustration from what we read con-

cerning the soldiers of Herod Antipas in St. Luke xliii. 11. It is highly probable that the corps under consideration was identical with a cohort of Italian volunteers in Syria, which is mentioned in an ancient inscription adduced by Akerman (*Numismatic Illustrations of the New Testament*, p. 33, an unpretending treatise which ought not to be overlooked in any commentary on this book of the Bible).

Ver. 2. A devout man, etc. We enter here upon the description of the personal character of Cornelius; and the particulars contained even in this verse are copious and impressive. It is useful to enumerate them separately: (1) He was a 'devout' or religious man. The word (*εὐσεβής*) used here has reference simply to personal character, and is different from the other word (*εὐσεβείας*) similarly translated elsewhere (as in Acts xvii. 4), and denoting a proselyte to Judaism. (2) The character of the religion of Cornelius is yet more precisely described by the statement that he was one 'that feared God.' This phrase, 'God-fearing,' as used in Scripture, is full of meaning. It denotes that all the concerns of life and duty are referred to God. As employed here of Cornelius, it implies that he had given up the polytheism in which he had been brought up. (3) 'With all his house.' This exhibits his religion in a wider scope, and gives us a still higher view of his character. His piety was not merely personal, but domestic. His house was regulated on religious principles. And this, as we shall see, is in harmony with what we read below. (4) He 'gave alms.' His religious faith exhibited proof of its reality by practical sympathy, charity, and self-denial. (5) He gave 'much alms.' The help he bestowed on the poor was not scanty, but liberal and large. This additional touch in the portrait should by no means be overlooked. (6) These alms were given to the people, *i.e.* to the Jewish people. This is a very expressive feature in the portrait. He treated the Jews around him, not with scorn, but with kindness. This charity to them meant more than if it had been shown to compatriots and persons having the same early religious associations with himself in an Italian city. Mr. Humphry says very well here: 'His almsgiving was the more remarkable, as being contrary to the practice of Roman officers, who generally plundered the provincials to the utmost.' This particular co-ordinates Cornelius with that centurion in the Gospel history whose servant was healed by Christ (see Luke vii. 5). (7) This centurion at Cæsarea was a man of prayer. Here we see in him the very heart of the reality of religion. (8) Not only so, but he was persevering in prayer: he prayed 'continually' (*διαπαντός*). Prayer with him was not a mere impulse, but a habit; and this has always been the characteristic of the saints. As to the meaning of the adverb employed here, Dr. Adam Clarke says of Cornelius: 'He was ever in the spirit of prayer, and often in the act.'

Further illustrations of the character of Cornelius will come to view as we proceed. But meanwhile it demands our observation that a man so eminently good should be placed at the head of all Gentile Christianity. This was, as the same commentator says, 'a proper person to be the connecting link between the two peoples.' The choice of such a man for such a place in history leads us to recognise the wisdom and goodness of God. And this remark may be added, that the facts before us are

in harmony with other facts in the early Gospel history. Just as the apostles were men of high character, so it is here. St. John and (probably) St. Peter were earnest disciples of John the Baptist. St. Paul had always been marked by a strong zeal for religion, and for a strictly moral life. So the great representative Gentile convert was a man of the highest character. Salvation is indeed available for the worst sinners, and the worst sinners may become great saints; but in the choice of the conspicuous members of the earliest Church, no special honour is put upon reclaimed profligates.

*Vision of Cornelius at Caesarea—Messengers sent to St. Peter at Joppa, 3-8.*

Ver. 3. **He saw in a vision evidently.** The language seems carefully chosen so as to assert the certainty and absolute distinctness of the vision. This was not a dream or a trance. What Cornelius saw was addressed to his waking senses. His own language afterwards (x. 30) is that 'a man stood before him and spoke'; and Peter, at a later period still (xi. 13), remembering the account given to him by Cornelius, told the apostles and elders that he 'saw an angel standing and speaking to him.' It should be noted, too, that in each of these passages, where the event is subsequently related, the words 'in the house' occur.

**About the ninth hour of the day.** This is the first place where the question necessarily arises, whether Cornelius was at this time a proselyte to Judaism or not. The ninth hour (i.e. three in the afternoon) was one of the stated Jewish hours of prayer. It was at this time of the day, specially named as an hour of prayer, that we have seen Peter and John going to the Temple (iii. 1). Other hours of prayer were the third (ii. 15) and the sixth (x. 9). Moreover, though nothing is said about prayer in the verse before us, Cornelius distinctly says afterwards (x. 30) that he was at that time (and he names the hour) engaged in prayer. Thus it is evident that Cornelius, besides having formed the habit of prayer, had adopted some of the customary Jewish regulations affecting prayer. The whole tone of the narrative, however, and its place in the history convey the impression that Cornelius was by no means a proselyte in the sense of having been circumcised. There were various degrees of approximation to strict Judaism among those Gentiles who, at the period of the Roman Empire, were in contact with the Jews; and Cornelius seems simply to have been drawn into sympathy with the religion of the Hebrews on its moral and spiritual side. Thus it is correct to say (and it is an important way of stating the matter) that he was 'the first Pagan baptized by an apostle.'

**An angel.** This fact would weigh forcibly with the apostles and elders at Jerusalem, when these occurrences were brought before them. Thus Peter in his apologetic account (xi. 13) lays stress upon it. The messengers (x. 22) use the phrase 'holy angel.' The description given by Cornelius himself (x. 30) is, that what he saw was 'a man in bright clothing,' which is strictly in analogy with the account of angels in the Gospels (John xx. 12; see Acts i. 10).

**Coming in.** This is part of the description which helps to give definiteness and certainty to the vision (see below, 'when the angel departed,' ver. 7). Cornelius distinctly saw his heavenly visitant come and go.

**Saying unto him, Cornelius.** This addressing of the person by name is, again, according to the analogy of the visions recorded in the Bible, as in the cases of Samuel in the Old Testament, and St. Paul at his conversion. A distinct appeal was made at Caesarea to the hearing, as well as the seeing, of Cornelius. Stier says: 'This was the answer to his entreaties; it was as if the holy messenger had said to him in the name of the Lord, I know thee by name, and thou hast also found grace in my sight.'

Ver. 4. **Looking on him and becoming afraid.** The first of the phrases used here is exactly that which Peter uses (xi. 6) to describe his own earnest attention to what appeared to him at Joppa. There is no part of the description of Peter's trance corresponding with what we read here of the 'fear' of Cornelius.

**For a memorial before God.** In what sense are we to understand that the prayers and alms of Cornelius became a *μνησέω* in the presence of God? Some answer to this question is given by ver. 31, where the equivalent expression is 'are remembered (*ἀνυμνήσαντο*) in the presence of God.' He was now manifestly to be 'remembered.' It was no longer to appear as if he was forgotten. Perhaps he had prayed long. He had shown his faith by his prayers; and further proof had been given by his charity. And now all this was to be openly recollected and rewarded: a record had been entered in heaven, so that an answer should come in due season. The language is similar to that which is used by the LXX. in reference to the burnt-offering in Lev. ii. 2. The 'prayers and alms' of Cornelius expressed what a Hebrew sacrifice expressed; and they were registered in heaven accordingly (see Heb. xiii. 16). They were proofs that grace was really working in the heart of Cornelius; and they were in due time acknowledged.

Ver. 5. **Send men to Joppa.** The exact mention of the place is very emphatic: and it recurs again both in the account given by Cornelius to Peter (x. 32), and in the apologetic statement made by Peter before the apostles and elders (xi. 13). We should notice, too, with what definite force Joppa is incidentally named in x. 8, 23, and xi. 5. This is all part of the explicit assertion of the facts of the story as literally true. For the connection with the preceding part of the history, see note on x. 1.

**Simon, who is surnamed Peter.** It is very observable that this exact phrase in its completeness is found four times in this narrative (see x. 18, 32, and xi. 13). The messengers use it when they came from Caesarea to Joppa and speak to Peter himself: Cornelius adduces it in his account of the reasons which led him to send to Joppa; and Peter brings it forward again, when he justifies his own conduct before the apostles and elders at Jerusalem. We are, of course, reminded of the Lord's own emphatic naming of Simon by a new name (John i. 42; Matt. xvi. 18). This reiteration in the Acts of the Apostles is an expressive link between that book and the history contained in the Gospels; and it points our thoughts to the fulfilment or part of the fulfilment of our Lord's prophecy regarding Peter. But we can see another reason for this reiteration and precision. The exact designation of the man who was to bring the Gospel to Cornelius is an essential part of the transaction. The Divine direction is perceptible

in every act and every word recorded. Reuss states this matter very well, when he says: 'Ce n'est pas seulement un avis qui l'adresse à l'apôtre, mais surtout une instruction donnée à l'apôtre lui-même, pour que celui-ci comprenne et accepte la mission spéciale qu'il reçoit.' As to the supernatural character of the communication he adds: 'Il n'en fallait pas moins pour engager Pierre dans cette voie nouvelle. . . . Une révélation *subsidiare* était indispensable pour le convaincre qu'un païen pouvait recevoir le baptême, chose qu'il ignorait encore et que ses collègues ont de la peine à croire' (xi. 1, etc.) (*Histoire Apostolique*, p. 122).

The exact designation of Peter should be carefully noted, also, from another point of view. Cornelius was to be brought to the knowledge of Christ by the instrumentality of a *man*, not directly by the angel who appeared to him. This is in harmony with God's usual method of working in spiritual things. Moreover, he is to be brought to this knowledge by an *apostle*. This was not a commonplace instance of conversion. Philip the Evangelist was very probably then at Cæsarea (viii. 40, see xxi. 8); but this would not suffice. Reuss remarks that the baptism of Cornelius by an apostle would be likely to make a stir and noise throughout Palestine. The apostle, too, was to be *Peter*, one of the most Judaic. Dean Alford has a good note here on the imminent risk of *party*, which was thus averted. See also Dean Vaughan's *Church of the First Days*. All parts of the Divine scheme are seen to hang closely together at this crisis. De Pressensé points out how important it was that the most active and influential apostle should be gained. The occurrences in Samaria (viii. 14-17) had by no means yet removed all his prejudices.

**Ver. 6. With one Simon a tanner.** This, again, is part of the minute exactitude conspicuous throughout the narrative. Even this is repeated by Cornelius (x. 32) when he relates his experience to St. Peter (see ix. 43 and x. 17).

**Whose house is by the sea-side.** Here is the first intimation of the position of Simon's house. This circumstance is not stated in ix. 43. Its reiteration by Cornelius (x. 32), when he makes his own statement, is another proof of the definite nature of his vision. Thus the phrase is seen to have a true importance in the narrative. As to the position of Simon's house, this might have some reference to the convenience of the trade exercised by Simon. Moreover, he may have been forced to live there, because of some ceremonial uncleanness connected in the Jewish mind with the exercise of that trade. It is a direction of the Mishna that dead bodies, sepulchres, and tanyards are 'to be at least fifty cubits from the city.' Thus the very position of Peter's lodging may have had something to do with the preparation of his mind for the startling duty that lay before him. At all events, his temporary home at Joppa was not a place of any distinction and honour; and this, too, is significant.

**He shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do.** These words ought to be absent. The authority of the MSS. is decisive on this point. Probably they crept into the text from a reminiscence of ix. 6, under the feeling that there are strong resemblances, in some respects, between the

records of the conversions of Cornelius and St. Paul. It is clear, however, from xi. 14, that some words to this effect were spoken by the angel to Cornelius (see the notes on these verses).

**Ver. 7. When the angel was departed** (see note above on ver. 3). The phrase used by Cornelius himself (x. 33), when he tells his story to St. Peter, is, 'Immediately therefore I sent unto thee.' There is something of military promptitude in this (comp. Matt. viii. 9; Acts xxiii. 23, xxvii. 32). The arrangements for the journey were speedily made, and the travellers started that very afternoon.

**Two of his household servants.** The domestic character of the piety of Cornelius seems to show itself here from a new point of view.

**A devout soldier of them that waited on him continually.** 'This man is described as like his master or commander in religious character, and therefore peculiarly well fitted for the service now assigned to him. Although not affirmed, it seems to be implied that the other two messengers were like-minded; so that we have here the interesting case of a whole Gentile household brought, by intercourse with Jews and by the grace of God, to the very threshold of the true religion' (Alexander).

**Ver. 8. When he had declared all things unto them.** This would include 'the vision, the Divine command, and the expected revelation.' It might be asked why Cornelius did not send a letter to Peter, as Claudius Lysias did to Felix (Acts xxiii. 25). It has been suggested that Cornelius probably could not write. But it is more to the purpose to remember that he had not been in any official or personal relations with Peter,—that, in fact, he knew only his name and his temporary residence. His best course was to tell the whole story to messengers thoroughly trustworthy and like-minded with himself, and to leave them to discharge their errand according to their judgment. How they actually did perform this duty we see below (ver. 22). The manner of communication of Cornelius with the messengers exemplifies the confidence which subsisted between him and those who surrounded him in daily life, and thus affords a further illustration of his character.

*St. Peter's Trance at Joppa, 9-16.*

**Ver. 9. On the morrow.** The distance from Cæsarea to Joppa is thirty-five miles along the coast-road due south. The messengers started late in the afternoon. Hence they would naturally arrive about the middle of the next day. If they travelled by night, this was quite according to the custom of the country (see Luke xi. 5, 6).

**As they drew nigh unto the city.** It was 'about the sixth hour.' It is evidently intended that we should notice carefully the coincidence of time (see below, ver. 17, and xi. 11). No narrative could be written with clearer indications of providential guidance and of a Divine plan.

**To the house-top to pray.** It is equally important that we should notice the coincidence of *prayer*. It was in the exercise of prayer that Cornelius saw the heavenly visitant who told him to send for Peter; it was in the exercise of prayer that Peter was visited by the trance. It was through the meeting of these two silent streams of secret prayer that the conversion of Cornelius and its consequent blessing to all the world took place.

There is no better commentary on this aspect of the question than the familiar lines in the *Christian Year* (Monday in Easter Week) :—

'The course of prayer who knows?  
It springs in silence where it will;

But streams shall meet it by and by  
From thousand sympathetic hearts.

Unheard by all but angel ears,  
The good Cornelius knelt alone.

The saint beside the ocean prayed,  
The soldier in his chosen bower.

To each unknown his brother's prayer.  
Yet brethren true in dearest love  
Were they.'

The word (*δῶμα*) used here for the flat roof at the top of the house, is often so employed by later Greek writers. As to the choice of this place by St. Peter, every one acquainted with the flat roof of eastern houses knows how well adapted it is for prayer and meditation. For Biblical illustrations, see Deut. xxii. 8; 2 Kings xxiii. 12; Jer. xix. 13; Zeph. i. 5; Luke v. 19.

Ver. 10. **And he became very hungry.** The vision presented to him in the trance was adapted to the physical condition in which he was at the moment.

**Would have eaten.** The Greek word is *γίνομαι*, and it is worth while to observe that the words in modern Greek for breakfast and for the midday meal are *πρόγευμα* and *γύμνα*.

In St. Peter's apologetic statement at Jerusalem (xi. 5) he says nothing of the hour of the day, of the house-top, or of the preparation for his meal. These were circumstantial details, which were of no special moment then. His business then was to state the manner of these Divine revelations to him, which he did minutely. These circumstantial details, however, are of high importance in the direct narrative. They add to its life and reality, and they constitute part of the process through which Peter was brought to his new state of mind. It is to be observed, on the other hand, that St. Peter did very expressly state at Jerusalem that he was engaged in *prayer* when he fell into the trance. To the 'apostles and elders' this would be an argument of the utmost force. For, with all their prejudices, they knew that prayer was the appointed path towards Divine enlightenment, and the appointed help for the discharge of duty.

**He fell into a trance.** Literally, 'an ecstasy (*ἐκστασις*) came upon him.' The true reading is *ἐκστασις*, not *ἐκστασις*. His own words at Jerusalem are, 'In an ecstasy I saw a vision.' This preternatural state of mind in which Peter saw the allegorical vision is to be contrasted with the full retention of his natural faculties with which Cornelius saw the angel (see note above on ver. 3). Chrysostom says of Peter's trance or rapture that 'the soul, so to speak, was withdrawn from the body' (see 2 Cor. xii. 1-3).

Ver. 11. **Saw heaven opened.** The verb in the original denotes that he gazed upon the opened heaven, and carefully surveyed it. Peter's own phrase afterwards (xi. 6) is that he 'fastened his eyes' on what he saw, and 'considered.' In his trance he was conscious of an exercise of close attention, and he remembered it.

**Descending unto him.** In the Greek there is, according to the best mss., nothing corresponding with the phrase 'unto him.' But this point is very emphatically expressed in St. Peter's own vivid account afterwards (xi. 5), 'It came even to me.' The impression conveyed is that the great sheet not only floated from heaven, but gradually approached St. Peter, so as to invite his close examination.

**Knit at the four corners.** The more literal translation would be, 'fastened to the ends of four cords,' the upper part of the cords being lost in the heavens. This must have been the view of the meaning of the word *ἄγκυραι*, entertained by one of the old Greek commentators, who fancifully interprets it as denoting the four gospels. If the word meant 'corners,' we should expect the article *ταῖς*.

Ver. 12. **All manner of beasts.** It is useless to speculate on the way in which the impression of the appearance of 'all' animals was conveyed. Calvin, quoted by Gloag, says very justly: 'We must not measure this seeing according to the manner of men, because the trance gave Peter other eyes.'

**Wild beasts.** This part of the sentence ought to be absent in the verse before us; and it is an obvious remark that such creatures were to be included among the quadrupeds and reptiles. The phrase, however, does occur in the more vivid and detailed account given by St. Peter himself in xi. 6 (see the note there).

We must conceive of those animals which were ceremonially unclean as being more peculiarly conspicuous in the vision. Stier suggests that 'probably the unclean beasts presented themselves first at the edge of the sheet.'

Ver. 13. **Rise, Peter.** He may have been reposing, or he may have been on his knees in prayer. The voice addresses him by name, as in the cases of Moses (Ex. iii. 4), Samuel (1 Sam. iii. 10), Cornelius (Acts x. 3), and St. Paul (ix. 4).

**Kill and eat.** In xi. 7, in the Authorised Version, we have 'slay and eat,' but in the Greek original the words are the same.

Ver. 14. **Not so, Lord.** This expostulation, so to speak, addressed by St. Peter to the Deity, is quite according to the analogy of Divine visions recorded in Scripture (comp. especially St. Paul's expostulation in the Temple (xxii. 19), when he is required to quit Jerusalem).

**I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean.** St. Peter's own phrase, in the account of the transaction, given afterwards at Jerusalem, is, 'Nothing common or unclean hath at any time entered into my mouth.' St. Peter had always lived as a conscientious and scrupulous Jew. The command was a contradiction to the whole previous tenor of his life. No greater shock to this Hebrew apostle can be imagined than to be told to assuage his hunger by eating swine's flesh or foul reptiles. It is recorded in the Second Book of Maccabees (vi. 18, vii. 1) that Hebrews submitted to death that they might escape such an indignity. And this distinction between clean and unclean beasts was correlative with, and representative of, the Jewish distinction between the Hebrew nation and all other nations. The two prejudices (if this term may be applied to what rested, in a great degree, on Divine appointment) might be expected to collapse to-



gether. At present, indeed, Peter was in a state of utter wonder and perplexity. A word, however, had been spoken to him, which, in the progress of subsequent instruction, was to become a revelation.

Ver. 15. **A second time.** The mention of this fact is a pointed part of his statement at Jerusalem (xi. 9), and he adds there that this second voice came 'from heaven.'

**What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common.** The peremptory command now becomes the emphatic statement of a principle. 'This is a new step in the instruction which St. Peter was receiving, a further preparation for that which was to follow. It is incumbent on us to observe that there is a distinct reference here to a Divine ordinance. It is God that made all things pure. Hence we are not to regard them as impure. We are at once reminded here of certain words recorded in the Gospel history, when Christ Himself said that 'that which entereth into a man's mouth cannot defile him.' But it is very important to

observe that in that passage, as given by St. Mark (vii. 19), the sense is, '*this Christ said, pronouncing all meats clean,*' the correct reading being *καθαρίζων*, not *καθαρίζον*. This is noted by Dean Burgon (*Last Twelve Verses of St. Mark*, p. 179), who says of this part of the sentence, 'It does really seem to be no part of the Divine discourse, but the Evangelist's inspired comment on the Saviour's words.' The Lord Jesus did actually, by this discourse of His, make all things pure. And it is further noted that the apostle to whom these words were spoken at Joppa (and the use of *καθαρίζω* is identical in the two cases) was the apostle who directed St. Mark in the composition of his Gospel. Can we doubt that those words which he had heard from his Saviour's lips flashed into St. Peter's memory, when at Joppa he heard that command from heaven, or at least that the recollection of them came when he reflected on what he had heard? This thought is forcibly put before us by Canon Farrar (*Life and Work of St. Paul*, vol. i. p. 276), who has dealt with the matter



Traditional House of Simon the Tanner.

more fully in the *Expositor* for 1876. As to the fact of the reading in St. Mark, see a note by Dr. Field in his edition of Chrysostom's *Homilies on St. Matthew*, iii. 112. It is further to be observed that in St. Matthew's account of the Saviour's discourse, we are told that it was *Peter* who afterwards 'in the house' asked the meaning of what the Lord had said.

Ver. 16. **This was done thrice.** Evidently to fix all this occurrence in Peter's memory, and to convince him that that which he had seen was no mere dream or fancy of his own, but a really Divine communication. Moreover, there was a sacred emphasis in the number three, as we see from various parts of Scripture. By 'this' we must understand all the particulars of the vision, including what Peter heard and said, as well as what he saw. See xi. 10, where he lays stress on this threefold repetition, adding at the close that 'all' (*ἀπαντα*) were taken up into heaven.

#### *Arrival and Reception of the Messengers at Joppa, 17-23.*

Ver. 17. **While Peter doubted in himself.** Again we should give close attention to the coincidence of *time*. It is manifestly intended that we are to see here the marks of a providential prearrangement. The messengers who had been 'drawing nigh to the city' when the apostle's trance began (ver. 9) were now actually at the gate, having inquired their way to the house, where Peter, at the close of the vision, was in anxious perplexity concerning its meaning.

**Before the gate.** This was the outside door or gate which led, according to the fashion of eastern dwellings in all ages, into the inner court of the house (see xii. 13, 14).

Ver. 18. **Called and asked.** More literally, 'having called out' so as to attract the attention of some one in the house, 'they were asking.'



**Simon, which was surnamed Peter.** See note above on ver. 5.

**Ver. 19. While Peter thought on the vision.** This gives renewed emphasis to what is said in ver. 17. This phrase is stronger. He was silently pondering on the vision and revolving it in his mind. In the former case the historian had simply named the fact of the arrival of the messengers coincidently with the waking of Peter from the vision and the beginning of his perplexity. Of their arrival, or indeed of their existence, he himself knew nothing at present. But he is now to be informed by a special revelation of their coming. How great an impression the coincidence actually made on his mind, when he did know of their coming at this moment, we see from what he said at Jerusalem afterwards (xi. 11). It is enough simply to quote the words: 'And, behold, immediately there were three men already come unto the house where I was, sent from Cæsarea unto me.'

As to Peter's state of mind at this moment, he could not doubt that what he had seen was intended for some Divine instruction. That the distinction of animals was now on the highest authority abolished, may have been made clear to him. The remembrance of his Lord's words in connection with *men* may dimly have suggested something further. It should be observed that, whereas the first voice from heaven directed him to eat, the second spoke generally of a great principle. The vision had been linked on at the beginning to his own sense of hunger. Now at its close it is to be linked on to new outward circumstances. This connection is to be established in the most emphatic and commanding way. But he is to be assured and led on step by step. Only gradually is he brought from doubt to certainty. He does not know all till he reaches the house of Cornelius.

**The Spirit said unto him.** Thus it is that he is first informed of the arrival of the three men. This is a cardinal point in the narrative. We should note here, with the utmost care, that direct agency of the Holy Spirit which is made so prominent in the Acts of the Apostles. So truly is this a characteristic of the book, that it has been termed 'the Gospel of the Holy Ghost.' And what is conspicuous throughout, is pre-eminently a feature of this part of the sacred history, with which we are now occupied. See x. 45 and xi. 15. It is incumbent on us to mark what stress St. Peter himself lays on the direct interposition of the Holy Spirit at this point, and how emphatically he records it at Jerusalem (xi. 12), though in other respects he condenses the story. For instance, the *παράβολοι* of x. 20 does not appear in his own narrative. His having been on the housetop was an accident as to the religious meaning of the event. But the admonition of the Holy Spirit was vital.

**Behold, three men seek thee.** Here is his first intimation of the outward circumstances which are to be connected with his vision. This is the next step in his instruction; and it is given in the simplest and most rudimentary form. Who the men were, and whence they came, and on what errand, he is to learn afterwards.

**Ver. 20. Get thee down.** He descended, doubtless, by an external stair, which would bring him at once to the outer gate, at which the messengers were standing. See on ver. 17.

**Go with them.** He knows not whither. But an intimation is given of some journey to be undertaken. This is similar to the general method of other Divine communications recorded in the Acts of the Apostles. See xx. 22, 23, xxvii. 26.

**I have sent them.** A further point is here reached, of the highest doctrinal importance. In the outward literal sense, Cornelius had sent the messengers. If we go a step farther back in the narrative, we might say that the angel had sent them. But here we are brought to the primary active will which set all these occurrences in motion. In other words, we have before us here the truth of the personality of the Holy Spirit. Compare analogous instances in this book, when St. Paul is to be sent out on his first missionary journey (xiii. 2), and when his course is first directed to missionary work in Europe (xvi. 6, 7).

**Ver. 21. Then Peter went down to the men.** See note on the last verse. This coming down the outside stair, and suddenly standing face to face with the strangers, with whom he was presently to make such intimate acquaintance, is one of the most vivid passages of the narrative.

**Which were sent to him from Cornelius.** These words are absent from the best manuscripts. They are either a gloss suggested by xi. 11, 'Sent from Cæsarea unto me,' or they are introduced to make more complete a section set apart for public reading. The introduction of the words here, however, disturbs the true sequence of the narrative. At this time St. Peter knew nothing of Cornelius or of what had happened at Cæsarea.

**Behold, I am he whom ye seek.** This directness is like what we read elsewhere of St. Peter. *Coram quem queritis adsum.* But it is worth while at this point to turn in thought from him to the messengers. They must have been much startled by this sudden address. They saw in a moment the man whom they were seeking: they perceived that some supernatural communication had been made to him; and renewed strength must have been given instantaneously to their conviction that they were engaged in no common transaction.

**What is the cause wherefore ye are come?** He was entirely ignorant as yet of the details of their errand: and these he was to learn, not supernaturally, but by the usual methods of information. The two things which he had learnt supernaturally were, first, the general preparatory and as yet obscure lesson of the trance; and, secondly, the fact that those men whom he saw before him were divinely sent, and that he was to accompany them.

**Ver. 22. Cornelius the centurion.** The correct translation is 'a centurion.' St. Peter as yet knew nothing of Cornelius; and there were in Palestine many officers of the same military rank.

**A just man, and one that feareth God, and of good report among all the nation of the Jews.** Here, through the testimony of the messengers, certain new elements of the character of Cornelius come to view, and in the most interesting way. It is very instructive to observe how judiciously the messengers discharge their errand. Besides being one who 'feared God,' Cornelius was a 'just' man, a man of rectitude; and he was beloved, trusted, and respected, not merely by the Gentiles, but by 'the Jews,' and not only by some partial members of the Jewish community whom he had served, but by 'all the Jews.' It

was conciliatory on the part of the messengers to mention these things, and good policy to lay stress on them: and this, too, is the most natural place in the narrative for such testimony to appear. It is worth while to observe here that the word used by these men for 'nation' is *ἔθνος*. The natural word for Jews to have employed would have been *λαός*.

**Warned from God.** The words 'from God' do not strictly and literally appear in the original: but their sense is implied in the verb, which is the same that Heathens would employ for the communication of a Divine oracle.

**An holy angel.** This is put in a form which would be acceptable to Peter and the other Jews.

**To send for thee.** There seems here to be an apologetic explanation of the fact that Cornelius had not come himself.

**To hear words of thee.** We have seen that the equivalent words in ver. 6 of the Authorised Version are spurious. The same remark may be made of the phrase before us here, and the equivalent phrase in ver. 32. But words to the same effect and more full are found in St. Peter's own account before the apostles and elders (xi. 14). And there is no doubt that a communication to this effect was made by the angel to Cornelius. The 'word of hearing' (Rom. x. 17; Gal. iii. 2, 5) was the instrumentality used for the saving of his soul, and for the instruction of the world through his conversion.

**Ver. 23. Then called he them in, and lodged them.** Already Peter seems to have learned something of the significance of what had been communicated to him in the trance. To join together in social intercourse with Gentiles was precisely the point of Hebrew scruple. For a Jew to receive a Gentile as an intimate guest into his house was an act unheard of. We see from what follows (x. 28, xi. 3), that to eat with Gentiles was abhorrent to the Jews. It must not, however, be taken as certain that these messengers from Cornelius, though hospitably received, did eat at the same table with Peter and the rest of the inmates in the house of Simon the Tanner.

*Journey from Joppa and Reception by Cornelius,*  
23-29.

**On the morrow, i.e.** after the arrival of the messengers. No time was lost. On the other hand, there was no undignified haste. This was not a case for excitement, but for deliberate action. Moreover, some preparation for the journey was requisite, as well as some arrangements with those who were to accompany Peter.

**Certain brethren from Joppa accompanied him.** From x. 45 we learn that these companions of the apostle were 'of the circumcision:' and from xi. 12 we learn that they were 'six' in number. How far Peter intentionally took them, in order that they might be witnesses of all the circumstances of this transaction, we cannot tell. At all events it was part of God's plan that their testimony should be in readiness, and that it should be used. We find that they afterwards went to Jerusalem, and there confirmed the statement made by St. Peter. As Stier remarks: 'How rightly, and in what harmony with God's guidance, he acted, the sequel soon shows' (*Reden der Apostel*, i. 13).

The imagination dwells on the incidents of this journey from Joppa to Cæsarea, and speculates on

the conversation which took place among the ten travellers. With the apostle were three Gentiles, one of them a Roman soldier, and six Jewish converts to Christianity. The mere thought of this company and this journey communicates to the line of coast between these two towns an extraordinary interest.

**Ver. 24. The morrow after.** The Greek word is the same as in vers. 9 and 23. The same remark may be made on the distance and time as on ver. 9. All is naturally consistent. The journey was by land. When two voyages by sea—between Troas and Neapolis—are named (Acts xvi. 11, 12, xx. 6), the time occupied in one case was two days, and in the other five. This too is quite natural.

**Cornelius waited for them.** More literally, 'was waiting for them.' He knew the time which would probably be occupied by the two journeys, and when he might expect to see his messengers, if their errand had been successful, along with that 'Simon whose surname was Peter,' who had been so mysteriously yet so definitely pointed out in the vision. The phrase seems to imply, if not impatience, yet serious anxiety, mingled with confidence.

**His kinsmen and near friends.** From the 27th verse we learn that there were 'many' that were thus 'come together;' and their large number seems to have surprised Peter. Taking this into account, we see here very distinctly a new indication of the character of Cornelius. His good influence was widely diffused around him, and he was desirous that all whom he knew should share the blessing granted to himself. Alexander says here, 'As this would hardly have been done without some preparation or predisposition upon the part of these friends, it would seem to imply a previous work of grace among these Gentiles, leading them to Christ, even before they came in contact with His Gospel or His messenger.' Stier says: 'This kindly, simple-hearted, and loving believer, is shown to us more and more as the centre and head of a considerable circle of pious Gentiles in Cæsarea, which city was now to be favoured by being the seat of the first Gentile church.' The 'kinsmen' were probably few; but the mention of them appears to prove that Cornelius had an established domestic life in Cæsarea.

**Ver. 25. As Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him.** If we have read this narrative with a due sense of the life that is in it, we shall be able in some degree to enter into the feelings of the two men at this moment. This first meeting of Cornelius and Peter is one of the great incidents of history.

**Fell down at his feet and worshipped.** Much has been said on this act of Cornelius; but we need not attempt to analyze his feelings too precisely. It was an impulse of reverence and thankfulness, under a strong sense of the supernatural. His mind, too, had been for some hours on the stretch. It is possible also that some of the thoughts, connected with what he had been taught as a Heathen concerning deified heroes, were lingering in his mind. It is more important to mark what follows concerning St. Peter's peremptory rejection of such homage.

**Ver. 26. Stand up: I myself also am a man.** We are at once reminded of the horror expressed by Paul and Barnabas, when the attempt was made at Lystra to give them Divine homage

(Acts xiv. 14), and of the repudiation of this kind of homage by the angel in St. John's vision (Rev. xxii. 8, 9); and we necessarily contrast with all this our Lord's calm acceptance of such worship, as is recorded more than once in the Gospel History.

Ver. 27. **As he talked with him, he went in.** Free and friendly intercourse with a Gentile is now become comparatively easy to Peter. He has reached a further step in the learning of his great lesson. The conversation at this point probably related to casual matters, such as health or the incidents of the journey.

**Many.** This adds much force to what was said before (see note above on ver. 24). Peter seems to have been surprised and much impressed by what he saw on entering.

Ver. 28. **Ye know.** We find the same form of appeal to the knowledge of the hearers below, ver. 37. Those to whom St. Peter spoke were familiar by hearsay with the main facts connected with the early promulgation of the gospel; and they were familiar by experience with the impediments to social intercourse which existed between Jews and Gentiles, especially in Judæa.

**An unlawful thing.** A difficulty has been needlessly imported into this phrase. The word (*ἀνόμιμον*) denotes rather what is opposed to venerable custom than what is contrary to positive law. There is no precise and explicit text in the Old Testament which forbids such intercourse, but the strict avoiding of such intercourse is in harmony with the whole spirit of the Old Testament. As to the fact of this scrupulous separation, we have the evidence of contemporary poets and historians in harmony with that experience of Cornelius, to which appeal is made. Juvenal (*Sat.* xiv. 103) says it was the custom of the Jews 'non monstrare vias, eadem nisi sacra colenti,' and Tacitus (*Hist.* v. 5) says of them, 'Adversus omnes hostile odium, separati epulis, discreti cubilibus.'

**To keep company, or to come unto one of another nation.** The primary reference is to the custom of eating together at the same table. This is the point specified in chap. xi. 3 (see Gal. ii. 12). It is possible that at this moment provisions were set forth to view, made ready for the refreshment of the travellers after their journey. It is precisely in this particular that there would be the greatest risk of a violation of the law of Moses. From this point of view, too, we see the peculiar significance of St. Peter's vision. It must be added that the phrase 'of another nation' is very gentle.

**God hath showed me.** The word 'me' is emphatic, and it is contrasted with 'ye' above. Dean Alford puts this point well: 'Ye, though ye see me here, know how strong the prejudice is which would have kept me away; and I, though entertaining fully this prejudice myself, yet have been taught,' etc. We should not fail to observe the stress which he lays on the fact that *God* had taught him what he had learnt (see above on the direct communication of the Holy Spirit, ver. 19). So far, St. Peter had now fully entered into the meaning of the vision. Only one other part of this Divine teaching was required (see note on ver. 34). It is observable that Peter says nothing to Cornelius of the strange sight which he had seen in his trance. This reticence is thoroughly natural.

Ver. 29. **Without gainsaying, as soon as I was**

**sent for.** He says that he had at once obeyed instructions which he felt to be Divine (see vers. 21 and 23, and xi. 12).

**I ask for what intent ye have sent for me.** Peter knew what the messengers had told him; but it was still needful that Cornelius should make his own statement. This is a case in which every step is to be made firm. The apostle asks for a full and authentic confirmation of what he had heard from the messengers.

*Statement by Cornelius in his own house, 30-33.*

Ver. 30. **Four days ago.** Questions have been raised as to the meaning of this phrase. But the simplest meaning is the best. It was exactly four days since Cornelius had seen the vision.

**I was fasting.** It is from this place only that we learn that Cornelius was fasting as well as praying on this occasion. It is a circumstance of the history, attention to which ought by no means to be neglected. We find in chap. xiii. 2, 3, and xiv. 23, a similar combination of fasting with prayer on occasions of great solemnity and responsibility. It may be added that Cornelius, in this state of abstinence, was the less likely to be deceived. The fasting had reference only to the day of the vision, not to the three previous days also.

**Until this hour.** Probably this was the sixth hour, when the mid-day meal would naturally be taken (see v. 9).

**At the ninth hour.** See ver. 3.

**I prayed,** literally, 'I was praying.' It is not expressly said before (ver. 3) that he was occupied in this way at the moment.

**In my house.** This is part of the vividness of the personal narrative given by Cornelius himself. In the account given by St. Luke above, it is said that the centurion saw the angel 'coming in to him.' Another remark may be added, that though Cornelius never heard the sermon on the Mount, he is seen here practising what is there enjoined as to private prayer.

**Behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing.** Here, again, are three particulars, all of which may be classed together under the general head of the vividness with which Cornelius describes what had happened to himself. The exclamation 'Behold' is not found in chap. x. 3, nor is it there said that the angel 'stood.' The description given by Cornelius himself of that which he saw was, that it was 'a man in bright clothing.'

Ver. 31. **Thy prayer is heard.** In the actual words of the angel 'prayer' is mentioned before 'alms'; whereas in the direct narrative (ver. 2), 'alms' are mentioned before the 'prayers.' Moreover, two separate verbs are used in this place. It is to be observed further that 'prayer' here is in the singular. It seems fair to infer that he was praying here for Divine illumination. This 'prayer' was perhaps the crisis and consummation of many previous 'prayers.'

**Had in remembrance in the sight of God.** See note above on ver. 4.

Ver. 32. **Send to Joppa.** Cornelius repeats to Peter with exact precision the instructions which had been given in his vision (vers. 5, 6). The city is named to which the message is to be sent, the surname of Peter is given, also the name and trade of his host, and the exact position of his residence. In one respect, in the mention of the

'house' of Simon, this statement is more vivid than the former.

**Who, when he cometh, shall speak unto thee.** See notes on x. 6 and xi. 14.

**Ver. 33. Immediately I sent unto thee.** See ver. 7.

**We are all here present before God.** Both in this phrase and in that which follows, 'all things that are commanded thee of God,' we have evidence of the deeply reverential and attentive attitude of the mind of Cornelius. We must remember that he does not at all know what Peter will have to say to him. Of this only he is sure, that he is on the eve of learning what he had long been anxious to know, and had earnestly prayed to be taught.

*St. Peter's Address in the House of Cornelius,*  
34-43.

**Ver. 34. Then Peter opened his mouth.** This denotes that something grave and deliberate, and demanding serious attention, is about to be uttered. The most solemn instance of the use of this phrase is in Matt. v. 2. What had been said before by Peter to Cornelius (ver. 27) was merely conversational and preparatory.

**Of a truth I perceive.** This is half a soliloquy. Peter now feels that he can justify to himself his own conduct, and he can take firm ground in instructing others. There had been some remnant of doubt in his mind before. Now he sees the whole case. The account of Cornelius himself, confirming what had been stated by the messenger, and showing an astonishing harmony between the experience of the centurion and his own, had brought his conviction to its culminating point. As Cornelius named all the circumstances minutely, and as Peter marked the religious, reverential spirit of those who were assembled before him, all hesitation vanished.

**No respecter of persons.** This word (*προσωποληψία*) is found only here; but the kindred words, *προσωποληψίῳ* and *προσωποληψία*, are found in Rom. ii. 11; Eph. vi. 9; Col. iii. 25; James ii. 1, 9. They do not belong to Classical Greek, but are strictly part of the Christian vocabulary. They denote the judging a man by a test which has nothing to do with his moral character; as, for instance, by his wealth, his social position, or his beauty (see 1 Sam. xvi. 7). Here the meaning is, that God does not judge of a man by his nationality, but by his character. Up to this time St. Peter had treated nationality as a kind of moral test.

**Ver. 35. In every nation.** The stress is on this part of the sentence. Nationality, even a divinely-appointed nationality, like the Jewish, constitutes, in the sight of God, no essential mark of difference between one man and another.

**Accepted with him.** The true distinction between one man and another, as before God, is moral. It is absurd to gather from this passage that all religions are equally good, if those who profess them are equally sincere, or, in the words of our eighteenth article, 'that every man shall be saved by the law or sect which he professeth, so that he be diligent to frame his life according to that law, and the light of nature.' If this theory were true, why should such elaborate pains have been taken to bring Peter to Cornelius, so that the latter might become acquainted with Christ? On this theory Christian missions are an absurdity.

The history of Cornelius is itself a proof that, in the words of the same article, 'Holy Scripture doth set out unto us only the name of Jesus Christ, whereby men must be saved.' The meaning of this passage is, that all the blessings of Christianity are freely offered to every human hand that is stretched out to receive them. The language of St. Peter himself at the Apostolic Council (Acts xv. 9, 11) was as follows: 'God put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith: we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they.'

**Ver. 36. The word which God sent.** The grammatical thread is very difficult to follow through this verse and the two subsequent verses. It is really impossible to disentangle the construction satisfactorily. Nor is it essential that we should do this. The simplest view, perhaps, is this, that we have here three things in apposition—(1) the proclamation of the Gospel (*εὐαγγέλιον*) which was spread through Judæa; (2) the subject-matter (*τὸ ῥῆμα*) of the proclamation, the new religion which was thus diffused; (3) the fact that Jesus was divinely anointed for this mission. A general knowledge of what was involved in these three expressions was already possessed by Cornelius and his friends. It was the inner meaning of this revelation which was now to be unfolded to them.

**Preaching peace by Jesus Christ.** More fully and accurately, 'proclaiming the good news of peace by Jesus Christ.' It has been asked whether this denotes peace between God and man, or peace between Jew and Gentile. The right answer probably is that both are included, but that the former is primarily intended. We should compare Eph. ii. 15-17, where part of the language is remarkably similar (see Isa. lviii. 19).

**He is Lord of all.** The commentators do not appear to have given to this most remarkable parenthesis the full attention which it deserves. In the first place, it assigns to Christ Divine supremacy in language which, though very brief, is as forcible as possible; and, secondly, it brings all mankind on a level, because all men stand in the same relation to Him (see Rom. iii. 29, 30).

**Ver. 37. That word ye know.** It has been pointed out above that the Greek term here translated 'word' is different from that translated in the same way in the preceding verse. The emphasis is on the word 'ye,' and there is an intentional contrast between it and the 'we' of ver. 39. It was inevitable that Cornelius and his friends should have had a general knowledge of the facts connected with the early promulgation of the Gospel, such as the work of John the Baptist and the beneficent miracles of the Lord Jesus. The news of these things must have penetrated among the Pagan population of Palestine, especially among those who were drawn by sympathy towards the Jews and the Jewish religion. Bengel remarks that St. Peter spoke to these Gentiles in a way very different from that in which St. Paul addressed Gentiles remote from Palestine, at Lystra and at Athens, and points out how St. Peter here refers (ver. 43) in general to the prophets, which St. Paul did not do on those occasions, while yet he does not, as when addressing the Jews, bring forward prophetic testimonies in detail.

**Began from Galilee.** For the facts of the case, see John i. 43, ii. 1, iv. 3. It is worth while to

note that Cæsarea was very near the district of Galilee.

Ver. 38. **How God anointed Jesus with the Holy Ghost and with power.** Some see in this an allusion, wholly or in part, to the action of the Holy Spirit in the incarnation of Jesus. It seems more natural to refer the words to the baptism of Jesus, an event on which the Evangelists lay the greatest stress. Thus Jesus of Nazareth became *Χριστός*. Mr. Humphry quotes a curious passage from Justin Martyr (*Dial.* p. 226, B), in which he alludes to the expectation of the Jews that the Messiah would not be manifested till He had been anointed by Elias (*μήχρης ἂν ἴδωμεν ἡμᾶς χρίσθαι αὐτὸν καὶ φανερὸν αὐτῷ ποιῆσθαι*). Bishop Pearson (*Exposition of the Creed*, Art. II.), referring to the doubt as to whether St. Peter alludes here to the sanctification of our Lord at His conception, or to His unction at His baptism, says: 'We need not contend which of these two was the true time of our Saviour's unction, since neither is destructive of the other, and consequently both may well co-exist together.' It is to be observed that in using this language St. Peter gives to Jesus the title of *Christ*, a name which soon after, if indeed this had not already occurred, became the basis of the name *Christian*. See the close of the next chapter.

**Who went about doing good.** The charm of this description of Christ's character and work could not be surpassed; and we should particularly observe that He is presented to Cornelius and his friends as a Benefactor before He is presented to them as a Judge: and could this description come from any one with greater weight than from St. Peter? for he had been with the Lord on those journeys of mercy, and had seen Him engaged in those works of healing. To quote the language of the next verse, he had been 'a witness of all things which He did, both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem.'

**All that were oppressed by the devil.** We need not suppose that there is in this phrase any special reference to demoniacal possession. In his 'former treatise' St. Luke attributes bodily suffering to the Devil. The woman 'which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years' is said (xiii. 11, 16) to have been 'bound by Satan.' The word Devil (*δαιμόλιος*) occurs in the Acts of the Apostles only here and in xiii. 10.

**For God was with him.** This reference to the perpetual presence of God with Jesus is in close harmony with what is said above—that God anointed Him, and with what is said below—that God raised Him from the dead.

Ver. 39. **We are witnesses.** There is an emphatic stress in this sentence on the word '*we*.' Dean Alford adds very justly, that by this emphatic word Peter at once takes away the ground from the exaggerated reverence for himself individually, shown by Cornelius (ver. 25), and puts himself, and the rest of the apostles, in the strictly subordinate place of *witnesses* for Another.

**All things which he did.** See i. 21, 22, where it is made essential that an apostle should be able to bear personal testimony regarding 'all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among them, beginning from the baptism of John' and continuing to the Ascension.

**Whom they slew and hanged on a tree.** St. Peter does not shrink from setting forth strongly the humiliating circumstances of the death of

Christ. His purpose is to lead Cornelius to the Cross (see ver. 43).

Ver. 40. **Him God raised up on the third day.** Here, as everywhere in the Acts of the Apostles, the Resurrection is the culminating point of the apostolic testimony concerning Jesus Christ (see, for instance, ii. 24, xvii. 31, xxvi. 23).

**Showed him openly.** Literally, 'gave Him to become visibly manifest.'

Ver. 41. **Not to all the people.** Alexander's remark here is just, that to commit the testimony to select eye-witnesses was 'more in keeping with the dignity and glory of the risen Saviour, which would now have been degraded by the same promiscuous and unreserved association with men, that was necessary to His previous ministry;' and he adds: 'The very fact that no such public recognition of His person is recorded, though at first it might have seemed to detract from the evidence of His resurrection, but serves to enhance it, by showing how free the witnesses of this event were from a disposition to exaggerate or make their case stronger than it was in fact.'

**Witnesses chosen before of God.** 'Witnesses, namely those who had been previously appointed by God.' Again there is reference to the Divine regulation of everything that related to the first proclamation of the gospel.

**Who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead.** It is a fancy of Bengel that the eating and drinking with Christ, here referred to, took place before the Crucifixion. But we must follow the natural order of the words. The facts here stated belong to the period of the Great Forty Days. Both St. Luke and St. John give instances.

Ver. 42. **Commanded us to preach.** The quoting of this royal command puts Christ before Cornelius in the position of supreme dignity.

**Ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead.** Again the Lord Jesus, and in a more awful manner, is set forth in the position of supreme dignity. His judicial work is made prominent here, as in St. Paul's address to heathen listeners at Athens (Acts xvii. 31). It is an appeal to the natural conscience. The absolutely universal expression 'the quick and dead,' including both Jews and Gentiles, is in harmony with the whole occasion.

Ver. 43. **To him give all the prophets witness.** It would be quite perverse to object here that no explicit reference of this kind is found in each several prophet of the Old Testament. St. Peter alludes to the general class of the prophets, and to the general drift of their writings. Some knowledge of the prophetic scriptures was, doubtless, possessed by Cornelius and his friends. It is observable, at the same time, that more stress is laid in this speech on the evidence from miracles than on the evidence from prophecy.

**Whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.** These concluding words of St. Peter's speech, here arrested by a Divine interruption, deserve the utmost attention. The language is absolutely universal, including Jews and Gentiles alike. It is, of course, implied that all men equally need this forgiveness. The doctrine of justification by faith could not be more clearly set forth. Compare St. Peter's own words, on a later occasion, with what now occurred at Cæsarea (xv. 9, 11). We must add that there is

great beauty and tenderness in St. Peter's passing from the contemplation of Christ as a Judge, to the contemplation of Him as a Redeemer.

*Second Pentecost at Cæsarea—Baptism of Cornelius and his Friends, 44-48.*

Ver. 44. **While Peter yet spake these words.** In his own account afterwards (xi. 15) he says that the miraculous interruption came '*as he began to speak*.' He was, therefore, evidently intending to address the assembly at much greater length. We need not speculate on the substance of what he intended to say. The other speeches in the Acts of the Apostles would furnish to us a sufficient analogy to guide us to a right conclusion. What is of the utmost importance to us to mark is, that an occurrence took place on this occasion which is recorded on no other occasion of the same kind. This is enough to mark off these events at Cæsarea as having a character and meaning of their own. The sudden interruption was far more forcible in its effect on the hearers than any additional words from Peter would have been. The arguments from history, from miracle, from prophecy, from conscience, were suddenly merged in something higher. The force, too, of this new and Divine argument was of the utmost weight for the 'apostles and brethren at Jerusalem,' as it is indeed for every subsequent age of the Church, including our own. It is observable, moreover, that the interruption came just when the word '*faith*' was pronounced in connection with 'the remission of sins.'

**The Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.** The same verb, *fell* (*irruer*), is used in St. Peter's account. The new impulse came *from above*. It was manifestly supernatural and Divine. So far there is a close resemblance with what we read in ii. 2, of the sound which came *from heaven*. The expression of St. Peter, too, at Jerusalem is distinct and express: the Holy Ghost *fell* on them at Cæsarea, '*as on us at the beginning*.' The manifestation of the Spirit then was an appeal to the senses, probably to the sense of sight, and certainly to that of hearing. It is said below (ver. 46) that they were heard '*speaking with tongues and magnifying God*.' How far the phenomena had a closer affinity with what is described in the second chapter of the Acts, or with what we learn from the First Epistle to the Corinthians, may be difficult to determine. Possibly it was a link between the two.

Ver. 45. **They of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter.** The expression in the original is very strong. They were almost out of their mind with wonder. As to the persons whose wonder here forms so prominent a part of the scene, see x. 23 and xi. 12.

Ver. 46. **They heard them speak with tongues.** It is not said here, as in ii. 4, that they spoke with *other* tongues. See note above on ver. 44.

Ver. 47. **Can any forbid water?** The true translation is '*the water*,'—the baptismal water,—the 'water sanctified unto the mystical washing away of sin.' The highest blessing of all, the

Holy Spirit, had been received: hence the minor gift, which was emblematic of the other, and which procured admission into the Church of Christ, could not be refused. Moreover, there is a strong testimony here to the importance of Baptism. On the one hand, indeed, nothing can be more emphatic than this narrative in its assertion that God can communicate His highest spiritual gifts irrespectively of all ordinances; but, on the other hand, it is asserted with equal emphasis, that divinely-appointed ordinances are not to be disregarded. '*Non dicit*,' says Bengel, '*Habent Spiritum, ergo aquâ carere possunt*.' Lechler, in Lange's *Homiletical Commentary*, has a striking sentence at this place: 'The peculiar manner in which the question is expressed sounds as though there was attributed to the water of Baptism conscious and energetic will,—as though Peter had said, If no one has been able to hinder the Spirit from coming upon these people, so also no one can restrain the water which wills to flow over them at Baptism.' Another thought also comes into the mind in considering these incidents. The baptisms appear to have taken place in the house; and the question arises whether they were effected by sprinkling or by immersion.

**Which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we.** The fact that in this instance, and in this instance only, the Holy Ghost was received previously to Baptism, has been the subject of many notes by commentators. There was sufficient reason, on this occasion, if we may reverently say so, for deviation from the common rule. No ordinary attestation would have sufficed to make the Divine command perfectly clear, that the Gentiles were to be admitted at once, and on equal terms with Jews, to the blessings of Christianity. This was in fact a second Pentecost: and may we not add that there was a close parallel between this occasion and the first Pentecost, in the fact that the open communication of the Spirit took place in both cases before the administration of baptism? (See Acts ii. 4 and 41.)

Ver. 48. **He commanded them to be baptized.** St. Peter did not administer the baptism himself. This was in harmony with the practice of St. Paul, who seems to have been very anxious lest baptism or any outward ordinance should be unduly elevated in comparison with the preaching of the Word. See I Cor. i. 14, 17. On such an occasion as that which is recorded in Acts ii. 41, there must have been a large amount of subsidiary ministration. How many persons were baptized on this occasion at Cæsarea we do not know.

**Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.** This residence of some days in the house of Cornelius is to be marked as a time of the utmost importance for St. Peter's future life, and is to be compared with the remarkable 'fifteen days' which he and St. Paul spent together afterwards (Gal. i. 18). During this short residence at Cæsarea, he must have learnt much that he never knew before concerning the Gentile mind, especially in its aspirations after religious light and peace.

## CHAPTER XI.

*Apologetic Account by St. Peter of the Conversion of Cornelius—Formation of the Christian Church at Antioch—Famine in Judæa.*

- 1 **A**ND the apostles and <sup>a</sup> brethren that were in <sup>1</sup> Judea heard <sup>a</sup> Vers. 12 29.  
that the Gentiles had also received the word of God. <sup>c</sup> See Jo. xxi. 23.
- 2 And when Peter was <sup>b</sup> come up to Jerusalem, <sup>c</sup> they that were <sup>b</sup> See Lu. ii.  
3 of the circumcision contended with him, Saying, <sup>d</sup> Thou wentest <sup>c</sup> Ch. x. 45.  
4 in to men uncircumcised, and <sup>e</sup> didst eat with them. But Peter <sup>d</sup> See Gal. ii. 12.  
*rehearsed the matter* from the beginning, and <sup>f</sup> expounded it <sup>e</sup> Ch. x. 28.  
5 <sup>f</sup> by order unto them, <sup>g</sup> saying, <sup>g</sup> I was in the city of Joppa <sup>f</sup> Lu. xv. 2;  
praying: and in a trance I saw <sup>h</sup> a vision, A certain vessel <sup>g</sup> Gal. ii. 12.  
descend, as *it had been* a great sheet, let down from heaven by <sup>h</sup> Ch. xviii. 26,  
6 four corners; and it came *even* to me: Upon the which when I <sup>h</sup> xxviii. 23.  
had <sup>i</sup> fastened mine eyes, I considered, and saw fourfooted <sup>i</sup> See Lu. i. 3.  
beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and <sup>j</sup> To Ver. 14:  
7 fowls of the air. And I heard a voice saying unto me, Arise, <sup>j</sup> ch. x. 9-12.  
8 Peter; slay, and eat. But I said, Not so, Lord: for nothing <sup>k</sup> See ch. xii. 9.  
common or unclean hath at any time entered <sup>k</sup> into my mouth.  
9 But *the* voice answered me <sup>l</sup> again from heaven, What God hath  
10 cleansed, *that* call not thou common. And this was done three  
11 times: and all were drawn up again into heaven. And behold,  
12 immediately there were three men <sup>l</sup> already come unto the <sup>l</sup> Gk. as ch. x.  
house where I was, sent from Cæsarea unto me. And the <sup>l</sup> 17.  
Spirit bade me go with them, nothing doubting. <sup>m</sup> Moreover  
13 <sup>m</sup> these six <sup>a</sup> brethren accompanied me, and we entered into the <sup>m</sup> Cp. ch. x.  
man's house: And he showed us how he had seen an angel in <sup>m</sup> 23, 45.  
his house, which stood and said unto him, Send men to Joppa,  
14 and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter; Who shall tell  
thee <sup>n</sup> words, whereby thou and <sup>o</sup> all thy house shall be saved. <sup>n</sup> So ch. x. 6,  
15 And as I began to speak, <sup>o</sup> the Holy Ghost fell on them, <sup>o</sup> as <sup>o</sup> Ch. x. 2. So  
16 on us at the beginning. Then <sup>p</sup> remembered I the word of the <sup>o</sup> Ch. xvi. 15  
Lord, how that he said, <sup>p</sup> John indeed baptized with water; but <sup>o</sup> (Gk.), 31-34,  
17 ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost. <sup>q</sup> Forasmuch <sup>q</sup> xviii. 8.  
then as God gave them the like <sup>r</sup> gift as *he did* unto us, who <sup>q</sup> Ch. x. 44.  
believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what <sup>r</sup> was I, that I could <sup>q</sup> Ch. ii. 4.  
18 <sup>r</sup> withstand God? When they heard these *things*, they held <sup>r</sup> See Lu. xxiv.  
<sup>r</sup> 8.  
<sup>s</sup> Ch. i. 5. <sup>s</sup> See  
Mat. iii. 11.  
<sup>t</sup> Ch. xv. 8, 9  
<sup>u</sup> See ch. ii. 38.  
<sup>v</sup> Cp. ch. xix. 9.  
<sup>v</sup> Ch. x. 47.  
<sup>w</sup> Cp. ch. v. 39

<sup>1</sup> better rendered, 'who were throughout Judea.'

<sup>2</sup> better rendered, 'But Peter commenced and explained the matter in order to them.'

<sup>3</sup> According to the older authorities, the rendering slightly varies, 'for what is common or unclean never has passed.' <sup>4</sup> The older authorities omit 'me.'

<sup>5</sup> Some of the more ancient authorities omit 'nothing doubting.'

<sup>6</sup> literally, 'thou shalt be saved, and also thy house.'

<sup>7</sup> more literally, 'If therefore.'

<sup>8</sup> better, 'who was I.'

their peace, and "glorified God, saying, \* Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted ' repentance unto life.

19 Now \* they which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen travelled as far as " Phenice,<sup>9</sup> and ' Cyprus, and ' Antioch, preaching the word to none but unto  
20 the Jews only. And some of them were men of ' Cyprus and ' Cyrene, which, when they were come to ' Antioch, spake unto  
21 the ' Grecians,<sup>10</sup> / preaching the Lord Jesus. And ' the hand of the Lord was with them: and a great number <sup>^</sup> believed,  
22 and ' turned unto the Lord. Then tidings of these *things* came<sup>11</sup> unto the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem: and they sent forth <sup>^</sup> Barnabas, that *he* should go<sup>12</sup> as far as  
23 ' Antioch: Who, when he came, and had seen ' the grace of God, was glad, and " exhorted *them* all, that with \* purpose of  
24 heart *they* would cleave unto the Lord. For he was ' a good man, and <sup>^</sup> full of the Holy Ghost and of faith: and much  
25 people <sup>^</sup> was added unto the Lord. Then departed Barnabas<sup>13</sup>  
26 to ' Tarsus, for to seek Saul: And when he had found him, he brought him unto ' Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people, and the ' disciples were called " Christians first in ' Antioch.

27 And in these days came<sup>14</sup> " prophets from Jerusalem unto  
28 ' Antioch. And there stood up one of them named " Agabus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be great \* dearth throughout all ' the world: which came to pass in the days of  
29 " Claudius Cæsar.<sup>15</sup> Then the ' disciples, every man according to his ability, determined to send " relief unto the ' brethren  
30 which dwelt in Judea: ' Which also they did, and sent it to the elders by the hands<sup>16</sup> of Barnabas and Saul.

v Ch. xiii. 1, xv. 32, xxi. 10; 1 Cor. xii. 28, 29, xiv. (1, 6), 29, (31), 32, 37, (39); Eph. iv. 12. So ch. ii. 17, 28; Rom. xii. 6. See ch. xix. 6. w Ch. xxi. 10. x Mat. xxiv. 7. See 2 Kings viii. 1. y See Mat. xxiv. 14.  
s Ch. xviii. 2. a Ver. 1. b Ch. xii. 25. Cp. ch. xxiv. 17. c Ch. xiv. 23, xv. 2, 4, 6, 22, 23, xvi. 4, xx. 17, xxi. 18; 1 Tim. v. 1, 17, 19; Tit. i. 5; Jas. v. 14; 1 Pet. v. 1, 5; 2 John 1; 3 John 1.

<sup>9</sup> *more accurately*, ' Phœnicia.'

<sup>10</sup> *The ancient authorities are divided here between Grecians (Greek-speaking Jews) and Greeks; the latter is the more probable reading.*

<sup>11</sup> *better rendered*, 'and tidings relating to them came,' etc.

<sup>12</sup> *Some of the older authorities omit* 'that he should go.'

<sup>13</sup> *The majority of the older authorities omit* 'Barnabas;,' *render*, 'Then he departed,' etc. <sup>14</sup> *literally*, 'came prophets from Jerusalem down to Antioch.'

<sup>15</sup> *The older authorities omit* 'Cæsar.'

<sup>16</sup> *literally*, 'by the hand;,' *the Greek word is in the singular.*

*Apologetic Account by St. Peter at Jerusalem of the Conversion of Cornelius, xi. 1-18.*

The commentators have given far too little attention to this section of the Apostolic History. Thus in the excellent commentaries of Bishop Wordsworth, Dean Alford, and Mr. Humphry, the annotations on these eighteen verses collapse into almost nothing. But in fact the account

given by St. Peter himself at Jerusalem before the 'apostles and brethren' who blamed him is by no means a mere repetition of the direct account by St. Luke, which we have had in the tenth chapter. There are variations of the most instructive kind, connected with this new occasion, and furnishing, on a careful comparison of the two chapters, a very valuable indirect proof of the natural truthfulness of the whole story.



The argument will be briefly summed up in an Excursus at the close. In the notes on these verses some of the separate points will be indicated one by one.

**Ver. 1. The apostles and brethren that were in Judæa.** Probably some of them were at Jerusalem, and some of them itinerating, like St. Peter, through the Holy Land, for the purpose of spreading the Gospel (see i. 8, x. 37). It is observable that the 'elders' or presbyters, who are first mentioned in the last verse of this chapter, do not yet appear. Compare xv. 2.

**Heard.** Such an occurrence, especially as it had taken place in the conspicuous town of Cæsarea, and had been connected with the conduct of one so prominent as St. Peter, could not possibly have been concealed. The news must have rapidly spread through all the Christian communities of the land.

**That the Gentiles also had received the Word of God.** These 'apostles and brethren' had Christian hearts, and they must have rejoiced in the thought that the Gospel had found acceptance in other hearts (see ver. 18). That which they could not understand was that these Gentiles should have been reached by this blessing without first becoming Jews.

**Ver. 2. When Peter was come up to Jerusalem.** For what reason he went thither we are not told. He seems to have gone direct from Cæsarea. The form of expression is that which would be natural to describe such a journey. See Acts xviii. 22.

**They that were of the circumcision.** By this is expressed, not simply that they were Jews, but that they had a strong and deep feeling regarding the necessity of circumcision. With the exception of the recent converts, none except Jews were members of the Church of Christ. This expression, however, is one that it would be natural for St. Luke, writing some years afterwards, to use. And indeed now, for the first time, there were within the Church the two strongly-contrasted elements of Jewish and Gentile Christianity. We are exactly at the turn, where the history of the Christian Church passes into its new phase.

**Contented with him.** There was no judicial charge in the case. The subject, however, was one of serious personal debate: and it occurs to us naturally to remark that this could not have taken place on so serious a religious question, if the power of supreme infallible decision had belonged to St. Peter as the first of the Popes.

**Ver. 3. Didst eat with them.** This step involved all the rest. See above on x. 23, 28. It was not the communicating the Gospel to the Gentiles which they grudged, but the communicating it in such a way as to do violence to the most cherished principles of the past.

**Ver. 4. Rehearsed the matter from the beginning.** This was his most judicious course. A simple and careful statement of the facts from the outset was more likely to be persuasive than anything else. He did not argue. The mere telling of the story was a proof of the Divine teaching in this case, which was far beyond any argument. Another thought, too, forces itself here upon the mind. The course which St. Peter followed was utterly different from that which he would have adopted if the privileges of infallibility and supremacy belonged to him. If ever there

was a case which belonged essentially to the sphere of 'faith and morals,' it was the case of Cornelius.

**Ver. 5. I was in the city of Joppa praying.** It was essential that Peter should name the place where this remarkable experience had occurred. Thus he names Cæsarea below (ver. 11). He is laying before the 'apostles and brethren' a precise statement of facts. On the other hand, it is of no moment to mention the name of his host at Joppa, or the precise position of the house of Simon the Tanner, though these things were of importance in the commission of the messengers sent by Cornelius from Cæsarea. And to turn to another point, St. Peter does not stay to tell his hearers on this occasion that he was on the house-top when he fell into the trance, that the hour was noon, and that the event occurred when the people in the house were preparing his food. But it was essential that he should mention the fact that he was engaged in *prayer* when this strange series of events began. This was his starting-point. His fellow-disciples knew, by the teaching of their Lord, and through their own daily experience, the place occupied by prayer in the Christian scheme. And St. Peter's mode of presenting the subject to them is, in fact, a lesson for all time. If we begin with prayer, God will do all the rest.

**In a trance I saw a vision.** To them, so far from suggesting any difficulty, this would be persuasive. It was strictly according to all they had been taught in their knowledge of early Jewish history. In addressing Cornelius it would have been out of place, especially since all that was seen in the trance had a Hebrew colouring. The essential point for St. Peter (x. 28) to urge on the centurion was, that God had by some mode brought him to a new religious conviction.

**Let down from heaven.** This is more definite and vivid than that which we find in St. Luke's direct narration; and it is natural that this shade of difference should be found here, where the story is told by the eye-witness himself.

**It came even to me.** This, again, is an addition, which imparts much liveliness to the story as told by St. Peter himself. It is, moreover, an important addition, as showing that the circumstances of the trance were not vaguely apprehended, but that he saw everything definitely and distinctly.

**Ver. 6. Upon which when I had fastened mine eyes, I considered.** This, again, is an addition of value, both because of the animation it communicates to this narrative, and because the argument is strengthened by the fact that he deliberately inspected and reflected on what he saw in the trance.

**And wild beasts.** It has been noted above (on x. 12), that according to the true reading, this belongs to St. Peter's own statement only. It adds to the emphasis of the surprise felt by him on contemplating a multitude of all kinds of animals, and hearing a command giving sanction for his eating of them indiscriminately.

**Ver. 7. I heard a voice saying unto me.** In St. Luke's narrative the phrase is, 'there came a voice to him.' The external fact that a voice was uttered is that which he relates. St. Peter tells of his own inward experience. He 'heard' the voice. A communication was effectually made to his own intelligence and consciousness.

**Slay, and eat.** The Authorised Version in x. 13 has '*kill, and eat.*' But the word in the original is the same. This is an example of the love of our translators for variety in rendering, merely for the sake of variety (see Bishop Lightfoot *On a Fresh Revision of the New Testament*, p. 33).

**Ver. 8. Hath at any time entered into my mouth.** The same kind of comment may be made here as in the other cases. St. Luke has 'I have never eaten.' St. Peter expresses the matter more strongly, and with a personal feeling.

**Ver. 9. The voice answered me again from heaven.** The word 'answered' is more definite and lively than that which we find in the correlative passage; and the phrase 'from heaven' is an addition, which would have its force for St. Peter's present hearers. Nor must we forget the bearing of all this on future times. Stier remarks: 'The teaching of the voice from heaven through Peter's lips was affecting the whole Church.'

**Ver. 10. All were drawn up again into heaven.** The Greek is *ἀναρρέθησαν*. There is more life in the phrase than in what we find in Acts x. 16. The whole of what was seen in the vision disappeared by being carried up into heaven. Here, too, the word is *ἀναρρέθησαν*, there it is *ἐνιλάθησαν*. St. Peter's phrase is more animated, and it is likewise more suitable to the action of the 'ropes' seen in the trance.

**Ver. 11. Behold, there were three men already come.** He notes, and calls his hearers to note, the startling coincidence of this arrival. The exclamation 'Behold!' has its significance. Once more it is instructive to compare his mode of presenting the history at Jerusalem with the narrative as given by St. Luke. The apostle says nothing of the trouble taken by the messengers in inquiring for the house of Simon the Tanner, and of their manner of presenting themselves before the gate. These were facts external to the experience of St. Peter himself. Nor does he say anything of the intense mental consideration in which he was engaged when the messengers suddenly arrived. For himself at the moment this had been all-important. But that which it is essential for the 'apostles and elders' to mark is the visible presence of God's hand in the transaction. This was an argument, the overpowering force of which they could not easily resist.

**Unto the house where I was.** Where this house was, and what was the name of its owner, were questions foreign to St. Peter's mode of making his statement (see notes on x. 6, 42).

**Sent from Cæsarea unto me.** The naming of the place was of consequence (see notes above on the naming of Joppa, ver. 5). The words 'unto me' are emphatic (see above on x. 5, 22, 32; and comp. xv. 7).

**Ver. 12. The Spirit bade me go with them** (see note on x. 19, 20). The words 'get thee down,' which we find in the direct narrative, are omitted here. This is consistent. St. Peter had said nothing of having gone up to the house-top.

**Moreover these six brethren accompanied me.** Here suddenly we learn for the first time two facts respecting these his companions and witnesses,—first, that 'they of the circumcision,' who accompanied him from Joppa to Cæsarea (x. 23, 45), were *six* in number; and secondly, that they had accompanied him also to *Jerusalem*. This second fact has extreme significance, and shows how deep an impression had been made by the recent events at

Cæsarea and Joppa, and how careful and deliberate was the course adopted by St. Peter, in order to bring conviction home to his brother apostles and the Christians at Jerusalem generally. The phrase '*these six brethren*,' marking the vividness of his appeal to them at the moment of speaking, should not be unobserved (comp. Acts xx. 34).

**We entered into the man's house.** He condenses into a very short space the account of the journey and the reception, which, in the other narrative, had been given at some length. Another point, too, we should not fail to remark. St. Peter simply terms Cornelius 'the man.' There would have been nothing persuasive in his dwelling on the military rank of Cornelius, or his position at Cæsarea, or on the honourable character of the corps to which he belonged. These particulars would have been positively distasteful to his Jewish listeners. Even as regards the personal character of Cornelius, his habit of prayer, his generous almsgiving, his faithful discharge of domestic duty, it would not have been politic in Peter to have laid stress on these points before an audience full of prejudice against the Heathen, and reluctant to recognise the existence of true religion except under Hebrew conditions; nor were these the circumstances which had brought Peter to his present conviction. On the other hand, there was much point in his saying, however briefly, that he '*entered into the man's house.*' This was the very ground of the censure under which Peter had fallen (see ver. 3).

**Ver. 13. How he had seen an angel.** The Greek distinctly requires that this should be '*the angel.*' This is not the case in x. 22. Probably the mention of this angel was a conspicuous part of the story as it reached the ears of the apostles at Jerusalem; and to their minds it must have appeared a very grave part of the whole subject. This mode of making a revelation was in accordance with many parts of Hebrew history, and with their own experience after the Resurrection and at the Ascension. If an angel had appeared to 'this man,' this at least raised a serious question demanding very careful attention.

**In his house.** If the angel, too, appeared in his very house, this rendered the case much stronger. Not only did it make the risk of illusion less probable, but it seemed to give a kind of sacredness to that house, the entering of which by Peter they had so severely blamed. See x. 30.

**Which stood.** This had been emphatically stated by Cornelius to Peter. See x. 30.

**Send men to Joppa, and call for Simon, whose surname is Peter.** See notes above on x. 5, 32. It seems as if these words rang in Peter's ears.

**Ver. 14. Words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved.** See notes on x. 6, 22. 'All thy house' is a special addition here. The promise is in harmony with the preparation made for the Gospel in the house of Cornelius, as implied in x. 2, 7, 22, 24, and with the results of St. Peter's preaching, as described in x. 44.

**Ver. 15. As I began to speak.** From this we see that St. Peter was intending to say more than, in consequence of the Divine interruption, he was permitted to say. In x. 44 the phrase is simply, 'While Peter yet spake these words.' Here the apostle, recounting the history of himself, allows us to see, as it were, into his own mind.

**As on us at the beginning.** And therefore miraculously, with signs audible or visible or both.

This seems a natural and almost inevitable conclusion. See ver. 17. The phrase 'at the beginning' is worthy of careful remark. It is the same which we find at the opening of St. John's Gospel and (in the LXX.) at the opening of Genesis. St. Peter appears to claim Pentecost as the starting-point of a new dispensation. And yet eight or ten years had elapsed since that day. During this time Christianity had been limited to the Jews, and the community of the believers had been, as it were, simply a Hebrew synagogue. A second Pentecost at Cæsarea seemed necessary to supplement the first Pentecost at Jerusalem.

Ver. 16. **Then remembered I the word of the Lord.** There is great interest in observing how St. Peter describes what had been the process of his own mind at that critical moment. The interest, too, must have been extreme to some of those who were listening to him. His brother apostles, too, had heard the same words, spoken by Jesus, to which he here refers. The exact words are given in Acts i. 5, where the last interview of Christ with His apostles before the Ascension is described. This is to be connected, too, with the sayings of St. John the Baptist (Luke iii. 16); and perhaps our Lord had on other occasions Himself used the same language to His disciples. On the whole, we have in this part of St. Peter's address a link of great value between the history of the Gospel time and the history of the founding of the Church. The words of Christ, however, now came, as Hackett says, into Peter's mind 'with a new sense of their meaning and application.'

Ver. 17. **The like gift as he gave unto us.** See note on ver. 15.

**Who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ,** rather 'as having believed on the Lord Jesus Christ.' It was in virtue of faith, as Bengel says, and not because of circumcision, that they themselves had received the Holy Ghost. Hence the like faith among Gentiles was entitled to the like blessing. We should mark the stress laid upon faith in the narrative above. See x. 43, comp. xv. 9.

**What was I, that I could withstand God?** The Authorised Version is hardly adequate. It would be better thus, 'Who was I, that I should be able to hinder God?' The whole had been so evidently God's doing, that Peter felt as nothing in the presence of these great facts.

Ver. 18. **They held their peace, and glorified God.** The climax of this history is most beautiful. Probably there was a solemn pause, when Peter ceased to speak. But not only did they acquiesce in that to which no reply could be given, but they broke out into praise and thanksgiving. It was a noble example of candour, generosity, and charity; and though there was vacillation afterwards and dispute on the very point here at issue, this does not detract from the great and instructive lesson of this scene.

**Then hath God granted.** This seems to imply that after the silence there was a sudden exclamation and cry of joy.

**Repentance unto life.** When the grace of repentance is given, spiritual life is the result.

*Diffusion of the Gospel along the Phœnician Coast, in Cyprus, and at Antioch, 19-21.*

Ver. 19. **They which were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen.** The most obvious remark here is, that that which

appeared an irreparable calamity to the Church, became the direct means of diffusing Christianity in new regions. His martyrdom, in fact, led immediately to the first preaching of the Gospel to Pagans, after the conversion of Cornelius; and a wide diffusion of blessing, in consequence of a great calamity, has been the experience of the Church on many occasions since. It is not, indeed, certain that this wider missionary work was not anterior to that great conversion. The order of time in this matter is, in fact, of no great consequence. It is more important to note that the two occurrences were independent of one another, while they both converged to one great result. It is with the progress of Revelation as with the progress of Science. When a signal manifestation of new truth is at hand, there are commonly preludes and preparations in more places than one. Inspiration and Induction are, indeed, strongly contrasted with one another; but the following words of the late Dr. Whewell may, without irreverence, be quoted in illustration of the matter before us: 'Such epochs have been preceded by a period, which we may call their *Prelude*, during which the ideas and facts on which they turned were called into action;—were gradually evolved into clearness and connection, permanency and certainty; till at last the discovery which marks the Epoch, seized and fixed for ever the truth which till then had been obscurely and doubtfully discerned' (*History of the Inductive Sciences*, i. 13).

**Phœnicæ (Φοινίκης).** This is the same district as that which is termed 'Phenice' in xv. 3 and 'Phœnicia' in xxi. 2, and is, of course, to be carefully distinguished from the 'Phenice' (Φοινίκη) of xxvii. 12, which word ought to be differently pronounced. It is to be regretted that they appear in the same form in the Authorised Version. Both geographical terms were doubtless derived from the prevalence of the palm-tree: and this tree appears on some of the coins of Tyre and Sidon, which were the principal towns along the Phœnician coast. This coast district is hemmed in by the line of Lebanon and by the sea, and was sometimes termed Φοινίκη παράλιος, or 'Phœnicia maritima.' It was about 120 miles long and about 20 broad. A good Roman road along this coast made the communication easy between Antioch and Judæa. The stations are given in the Antonine Itinerary and the Jerusalem Itinerary (see Wesseling's *Vetere Romanorum Itineraria*, pp. 149, 582).

**Cyprus.** The first mention of this island in the Acts of the Apostles is in iv. 36, where it is named as the birthplace of Barnabas. It is mentioned again in the next verse of this chapter, and again in xiii. 4, xxi. 3, xxi. 16, and xxvii. 4. Recent events give a curious interest to the frequent occurrence of the name of Cyprus in this book. It is worthy of notice, too, that in every case it occurs quite naturally in the narrative, and in its true geographical connection.

**Antioch.** Here first appears a name of vast consequence in the early history of Christianity, and in the subsequent history of the Church (see note on ver. 26).

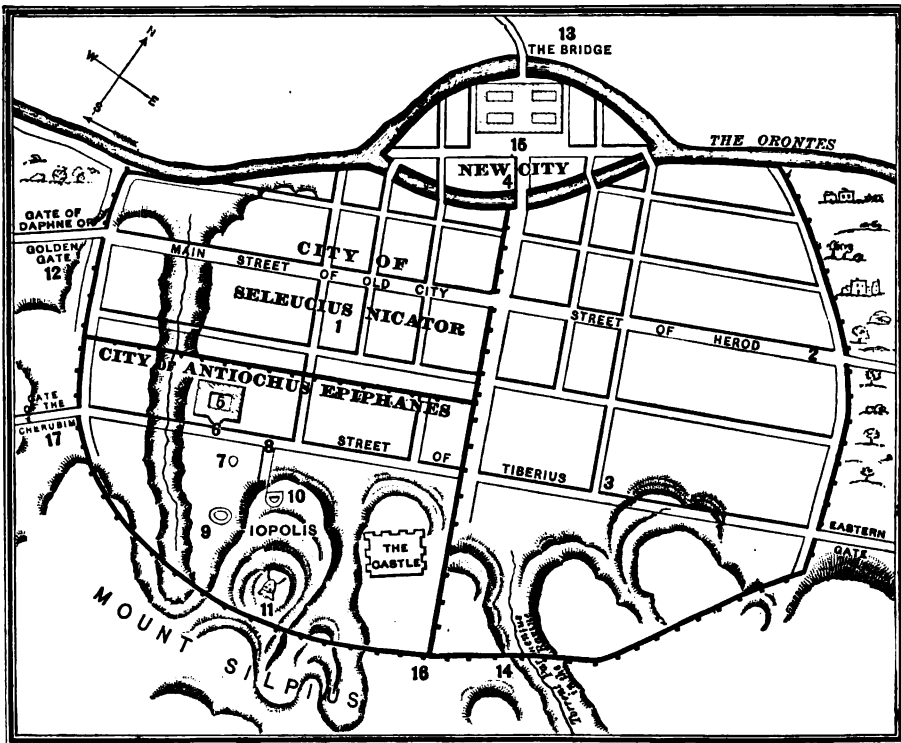
**Preaching the word to none, but unto the Jews only.** A question might be raised here as to whether 'Ἰουδαίοις' here is the antithesis to Ἕλλησις or to Ἑλληνισταί (see note on the next verse). The former is undoubtedly more according to usage than the other. However this may be, the

mere fact that St. Luke throws in this clause, shows his deep sense, and calls his readers to a deep sense, of the importance of what is coming.

Ver. 20. **Men of Cyprus.** It would be reasonable to imagine that one of them may have been Mnason, who in xxi. 16 is spoken of as 'an old disciple.' We should have been sure, but for what follows, that Barnabas was one of them; and there is little doubt that he had influence in promoting the active missionary work of his fellow-Cypriotes. It has been noted above (on iv. 36) that the Jews were very numerous in Cyprus; and it is worth while to add, in reference to the mention of Cyrene which follows, that about this time Cyprus and Cyrene were united in one Roman Province. Thus there was close political connec-

tion between them, as well as active mercantile intercourse.

**Cyrene.** In that part of the coast of Africa, of which Cyrene was the capital, immediately to the west of Egypt, and opposite Cyprus on the south, the Jews were very numerous. We have a proof of this in vi. 9, where we find that 'Cyrenians' had a synagogue of their own in Jerusalem. Again, 'Jews from the parts of Libya about Cyrene' were in Jerusalem at the Great Pentecost; and one such Cyrenian Jew at least (Luke xxiii. 26) was there at the solemn Passover immediately preceding. It is a reasonable conjecture that the occasion before our attention here may have been the time of a great festival. Another incidental proof of the existence of a strong Jewish



Plan of Antioch.

element in Cyrene, and of the connection of this place with the early spread of Christianity, is found in xiii. 1, where 'Lucius of Cyrene' is named as one of the 'prophets' who were inspired to originate St. Paul's first missionary expedition.

When they were come to Antioch. We should observe how our thoughts are drawn to this place, as to a focus on which all our attention is presently to be concentrated. The name of this city occurs six times in nine verses.

**Spoke unto the Grecians.** We here encounter one of the most important textual difficulties in the Acts of the Apostles. It always has been, and still is, a debated question whether the true reading here is *Ἕλληνες* (i.e. *Greeks* or *Heathens*) or *Ἑλληνιστάς* (i.e. *Grecians* or *Hellenistic Jews*). The manuscripts are very evenly balanced. We

might have looked to the Sinaitic MS. to have settled the question; but in this instance it presents a strange anomaly, its reading here being *εὐαγγελιστάς*, which is clearly wrong, while on the one hand it seems to point to *Ἕλληνας* as that which was intended, and on the other hand was clearly influenced by the word *εὐαγγελίζονται*, which immediately succeeds. On the whole, the evidence is in favour of *Ἕλληνας*. The Bishop of Lincoln argues strongly in favour of it. Dr. Alexander, whose (American) commentary is excellent, is inclined to the same view. So also is Dr. Kay, in a paper printed when he was Principal of Bishop's College, Calcutta. On the other hand, the majority of modern commentators feel strongly in the opposite direction, because of the obvious advantage which the reading *Ἕλληνες* would give

us as to the coherence and point of the history. With this reading all is easy in the interpretation of the passage; and the sequence of events flows on naturally. It is urged most truly, that with the other reading there is no sharp contrast between those who now received the Gospel and those who had received it previously, and that there is no apparent reason why the historian should mark the occurrence as anything new. Thus writers of the most various shades of opinion have confidently asserted that the true word here must be *Ἑλληνες*, not *Ἑλληνιστάς*. Dean Alford says that the latter reading 'gives no assignable sense whatever,' and that 'nothing to his mind is plainer than that these men were uncircumcised Gentiles.' Canon Norris (*Key to the Acts of the Apostles*, p. 135) uses similar language. Renan (*Les Apôtres*, p. 225) says, 'La bonne leçon est *Ἑλληνες*. *Ἑλληνιστάς* est venu d'un faux rapprochement avec ix. 29.' Reuss (*Histoire Apostolique*, p. 133) says, 'La leçon *Ἑλληνιστάς* est d'autant plus absurde, qu'à Antioche et dans les contrées environnantes on n'aura guère trouvé des Juifs parlant l'hébreu. La conversion des païens disparaît ainsi du récit et tout ce qui suit n'a plus raison d'être.' It is difficult to resist such unanimity of opinion, based on arguments so strong. Yet the very facility with which the problem is solved inspires some doubt. It is always hazardous, in such cases, to adopt the easier reading. The question must be left in some uncertainty; and it may be urged that there is really some contrast between the words *Ἰουδαῖοι* and *Ἑλληνιστάς*, that the Hellenistic Jews and the Heathen Greeks were probably in very free intercourse with one another at Antioch, and that the Gospel would naturally pass from the former to the latter. This too is to be added, that, if the received text is retained, the case of Cornelius stands on a much higher pinnacle than it would otherwise occupy.

Ver. 21. **And the hand of the Lord was with them**, i.e. those who were preaching the Gospel to new hearers. 'The hand of the Lord' is an oriental expression, and seems to indicate the manifestation of miraculous powers, which indeed we should expect on an occasion like this. St. Luke uses this phrase in two other places (see his Gospel, i. 66, and the Acts iv. 30). Some manuscripts add here the words 'so as to heal them.' Their authority, however, does not justify our seeing in this addition more than a gloss; and the suggestion probably came from Luke v. 17.

**A great number believed.** All such terms are relative. At all events a considerable Christian community was formed rapidly at Antioch, as had been the case at Cæsarea. Though Cæsarea was probably first in order of time, Antioch speedily became greater in importance. See vers. 24 and 26 for the progressive growth of the Church in this latter city under the ministrations of Barnabas and Saul.

*Mission of Barnabas to Antioch—His Character—Co-operation of Saul with him there—The Name 'Christian,' 22-26.*

Ver. 22. **Tidings of these things came into the ears of the Church which was in Jerusalem.** The Church in Jerusalem is here spoken of collectively, as a local *ἐκκλησία*; and the oriental phrase 'came into the ears of the Church' tends almost to personify it. On the other hand, it is

remarkable that no mention is made of the Apostles here, such as we find in viii. 14, xi. 1, xv. 2.

**They sent forth Barnabas.** See notes on iv. 36 and ix. 27. There is great beauty in the description of his character which follows. This mission was alike creditable to him and to them. If it was the free communication of the Gospel to Gentiles at Antioch, and their full reception of it, of which they had heard, they may have sent Barnabas simply to inquire into the facts and to seek explanations. But at all events they sent the man who was best known among them for large-heartedness and generosity of character.

**That he should go as far as Antioch.** If we follow the received text, the Greek seems to imply that Barnabas was to exercise his mission on the way, along the Phœnician coast-road, where the Gospel had been preached as well as at Antioch. See note on ver. 19.

Ver. 23. **Who, when he came and had seen the grace of God, was glad.** Somewhat of surprise is indicated in this language. However this may be, we see in this rejoicing, and in his attributing all this blessing to the free goodness of God, the marks of a true Christian heart. There was no grudging of the freedom of the grace, and no doubting of the reality of the Divine work which he saw. Barnabas was clearly the right man to have sent to Antioch; and all generations of Christians since have had in his mission grounds for praise and for 'glorifying God in him.'

**He exhorted them all.** The Greek word is *παριστάμι*. He did at Antioch exactly that which at Jerusalem (iv. 36) had led to his receiving the title of *εὐεργετὴς*. The word 'all,' too, in this passage is not without its significance. It communicates to the narrative an impression of diligent work, large sympathy, and copious success.

**That with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord.** He has no new doctrine to communicate. They were already in the right way. He approved of that which he saw. His exhortation was simply to perseverance, heartiness, consistency, and progress.

Ver. 24. **For he was a good man.** We ask here for the precise meaning of the word 'good,' and also why the particle 'for' is prefixed to the statement. The word 'good' does not mean merely that Barnabas was a man of earnest religious character. This is expressed by the words which follow. Rather it denotes that he was a man of a genial, generous, charitable, and candid disposition. This helps us to the meaning of the connecting particle 'for.' The reason is given why he unfeignedly rejoiced in what he saw at Antioch. There may have been misgivings and suspicions at Jerusalem. But in his heart there were none. He may have been much astonished—as much astonished as those who went with Peter from Joppa to Cæsarea (x. 45); but he frankly acknowledged the work of the Divine Spirit, and was glad because Pagans had received the full grace of God.

**Much people was added unto the Lord.** See what precedes (ver. 21) and what follows (ver. 26) as to the progressive but rapid growth of the Church in Antioch.

Ver. 25. **Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus, for to seek Saul.** The history of St. Paul is here resumed, suddenly and somewhat indirectly, from

ix. 30, which corresponds with xxii. 21, and Gal. i. 21. We have no information regarding the length of time he spent at Tarsus, or his manner of employment when there. But we cannot imagine him to have been idle in his Master's cause; and to this period is probably to be assigned the formation of those Cilician churches of which we find mention afterwards in xv. 41, at the beginning of the Second Missionary Journey. We feel sure also that this time of exile, like the time of retirement in Arabia (Gal. i. 17), was made use of for the deepening of his religious life and his further Divine illumination.

As to the errand of Barnabas, for the purpose of seeking out Saul and bringing him to Antioch, it is evident that the future Apostle of the Gentiles was by no means lost sight of by the Church, but that the resuming of his active public work was earnestly desired. It is possible that Barnabas knew something of that vision in the Temple, recorded in xxii. 21, when Saul was designated as Apostle to the Gentiles. It has also been conjectured that this searching out of Saul, and associating him with himself in the work among the new Syrian Christians, was part of the commission given to Barnabas. Thus the case of Antioch would be similar to that of Samaria, to which place Peter and John were sent (viii. 14), and would be accordant with our Saviour's habit of sending two and two on missionary work. However this may be, the character of Barnabas is at this point set before us in a most attractive light, in that he brought out of retirement one whose eminence was sure to supersede and eclipse his own. This has been forcibly noted by Calvin; and it has been illustrated, in modern history, by 'the conduct of Farel with respect to Calvin himself' (see *Alexander's Commentary*). Renan, with all his strange inconsistencies and wild theories, sometimes displays extraordinary sagacity in seizing the true import of points of the apostolic history; and his remarks concerning Barnabas are very just and happy. He says that 'Christianity has been unjust towards this great man in not placing him in the first rank among its founders,' that 'every good and generous thought had Barnabas for its patron.' As to the particular point before us, the bringing of Saul to Antioch, Renan says: 'Gagner cette grande âme . . . se faire son inférieur, préparer le champ le plus favorable au déploiement de son activité en oubliant soi-même, c'est là certes le comble de ce qu'a jamais pu faire la vertu; c'est là ce que Barnabé fit pour Saint Paul. La plus grande partie de ce dernier revient à l'homme modeste qui le devança en toutes choses, s'effaça devant lui, découvrit ce qu'il valait, le mit en lumière . . . prévint le tort irréparable que de mesquines personnalités auraient pu faire à l'œuvre de Dieu.'

Ver. 26. When he had found him. This, coupled with the strong expression used above concerning the 'searching for' Saul, seems to imply that he was not actually in Tarsus when Barnabas arrived there. Probably he was on some mission in Cilicia.

He brought him to Antioch. No reluctance is to be imagined on the part of St. Paul. On the contrary, he was probably overjoyed in the prospect of a wider field of work under providential encouragement. The whole credit, however, of this transaction belongs to Barnabas.

A whole year. This is one of the definite indi-

cations of time, which help us to put together the relative chronology of St. Paul's life. Other instances are found in xviii. 11, xix. 10, xx. 3, 31, xxiv. 27, and xxviii. 3.

Taught much people. Doubtless with success. See notes on vers. 21 and 24.

And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch. On two words in this sentence our attention cannot be too closely fastened.

The name 'CHRISTIAN' marked the arrival of a new fact in the world. This new fact was the formation of a self-existent, self-conscious Church of Christ, independent of Judaism. This, too, was only ten years after the crucifixion of Christ. How the history of the world has been coloured, how mankind has been blessed by the mere existence of this word, it is not necessary to state at large. As to the origin of this new name, it certainly was not given by Jews to the followers of our Lord. The Jews would never have been willing even to seem to sanction the opinion that Jesus of Nazareth was Christ or the Messiah. Nor was the name assumed by the followers of our Lord as a chosen designation for themselves. They were content with such titles as 'the disciples,' 'the brethren,' 'the saints.' This new term came from without, and from the Pagans. Its form, too, seems to show that it had a Latin origin. We are familiar in history with such terms as *Pompeians* and *Vitellians*; and the New Testament itself (Matt. xxii. 16) supplies us with a similar term in the word *Herodians*. It is most probable that this new term at Antioch originated with the public authorities, who gave the designation to the community which began then to make its existence felt, and which was bound together by allegiance (however strange this might seem) to one 'Christus.' It is possible, however, that the name was given by the populace in derision. Antioch was famous for its love of nicknames; and such may have been the beginning of the noblest name which any community ever bore. In the two other places of the New Testament where the name occurs (Acts xxvi. 28; 1 Pet. iv. 16), reference is clearly made to the fact that it was viewed as expressive of contempt and dislike. St. Paul and St. Peter, however, clearly saw, and strongly felt, that it was a title of honour. To which we must add the words of St. James (ii. 7), 'Do they not blaspheme that worthy name by which ye are called?' The whole subject is summed up in some simple words used by Tacitus (*Ann.* xv. 44), though in a sense very different from that which he intended, '*Autor nominis ejus Christus.*'

And the place where this name was given seems to fit the occurrence in a remarkable manner. ANTIOCH, the most important city of all Roman Asia, and the third in rank among the cities of the whole Roman world, had a character peculiarly cosmopolitan. Less distinguished for general culture than Alexandria, it was even more important than that city in the military and political sense. The situation of Antioch had much to do with its history. It stood 'near the abrupt angle formed by the coasts of Syria and Asia Minor, and in the opening where the Orontes passes between the ranges of Lebanon and Taurus. By its harbour of Seleucia it was in connection with all the trade of the Mediterranean; and, through the open country behind Lebanon, it was conveniently approached by the caravans from Mesopotamia and

Arabia. It was almost an Oriental Rome, in which all the forms of the civilised life of the Empire found a representative' (*Life and Epistles of St. Paul*, i. p. 149). Founded by Seleucus Nicator, and named by him after his father Antiochus, it had retained all its old elements, and had received new elements when it became the capital of the Roman province of Syria. It was famous for the beauty of its position and the splendour of its buildings, and infamous for the profligacy and fraud, sorcery and effeminacy of its people. Renan, with a true instinct (*Les Apôtres*, chap. xii.), revels in his description of its external features and of its strange and varied life. Its Christian history was subsequently very eminent; for it became the seat of one of the five patriarchates of the Church. Here, with the Acts of the Apostles before us, we are called to notice that Antioch was the mother of Christian missions, and the author of the Christian name. Chrysostom, its great preacher, claims what we read in this verse as one of the grounds why Antioch is a metropolis.

*Charitable Mission of Barnabas and Saul from Antioch to Jerusalem, 27-30.*

Ver. 27. **In these days.** This indication of date is general and vague; but, no doubt, the occurrence here related took place within the 'year' of active ministration at Antioch mentioned just above.

**Prophets came from Jerusalem to Antioch.** It would seem that they came of their own accord, not on a formal mission of an official kind. For the 'prophets' of the New Testament, see note on xiii. 1. They were inspired teachers, not necessarily with reference to the prediction of future events. This, however, was an instance which had regard to the future. Sometimes these prophets were women (see xxi. 9, comp. ii. 17, 18).

Ver. 28. **There stood up one of them named Agabus.** He appears again many years later (xxi. 10) in the same prophetic character, and again in connection with Judæa. From that passage we gain some impression of the manner in which certain of these prophetic communications were made. In that case Agabus employed gesture and symbol, like those of which we read on similar occasions in the Old Testament. In the present instance much life is given to the occasion by its being said that it was when he 'stood up' (*ἀναστὰς*) that he uttered his prophecy.

**Signified by the Spirit.** This is quite in harmony with what we read elsewhere in this book regarding such communications. There are two very marked occasions when the Holy Spirit is said to have given indications of coming difficulty and disaster. One was on the Second Missionary Progress of St. Paul, when his steps were ultimately guided to Europe. His wish was to proclaim the Gospel in Asia; but he was 'forbidden of the Holy Ghost.' On this he made an effort to evangelize Bithynia; 'but the Spirit

suffered him not' (Acts xvi. 6, 7). The other was at the close of his Third Missionary Progress, when he went in much despondency towards Jerusalem, 'not knowing the things that should befall him there;' only, he added, addressing the Ephesian elders at Miletus, 'The Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me' (xx. 23). It was at a subsequent point of this journey that he had that second meeting with Agabus which has been already mentioned; and still there is the same reference to the direction of the Spirit. This prophet 'took Paul's girdle, and bound his own hands and feet, and said, Thus saith the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles' (xxi. 11).

**Great dearth throughout all the world.** We learn from the best historical sources that this was a period of much distress in many parts of the Empire through famine, and that in this time of general scarcity there was special distress of this kind in Judæa. This is quite enough to satisfy all the conditions of the case. There has been much discussion as to the precise meaning of the term (*ἡ σινοπιρία*) here translated 'the whole world.' The safest plan is to regard it as a term vaguely denoting the whole Roman Empire, and

equivalent to the Latin 'orbis terrarum.' So it is used by Josephus. We must not forget, however, that it is employed in a more restricted sense, as denoting Judæa, in the LXX. (Isa. x. 23).

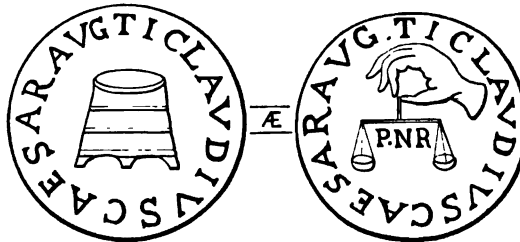
**Which came to pass in the days of Claudius Cæsar.**

This implies that

the present portion of the Apostolic history was not written in the reign of Claudius. The clause is to be regarded as a parenthetic note; and it is an instance of St. Luke's habit of marking dates accurately (see in his Gospel, i. 5, ii. 2, iii. 1). It must be added that this famine is one of the converging circumstances which lead us to the year 44 A.D. as one of the two critical dates which help us to fix, in its main features, the absolute chronology of St. Paul's life.

Ver. 29. **The disciples.** This designation of those, whom we have just seen for the first time 'called Christians,' is found in current use throughout the Acts of the Apostles (see, for instance, vi. 1, ix. 1, xv. 10, xx. 7).

**Every man according to his ability.** This is a very different aspect of giving pecuniary relief from that which we saw in the account of the charity and generosity of the earliest Christians in Jerusalem; and, if we may venture to say so, it is a higher aspect. See notes above (on ch. i., iv., and v.) on the risk of communism. The principle here acted on, viz. that each should give freely 'as God had prospered him,' is precisely that which St. Paul afterwards inculcated on the Christians of Galatia and Achaia (1 Cor. xvi. 2; see 2 Cor. viii. 12), and it is probable that he had much to do here at Antioch with this active movement of charity in Syria, and with its methodical arrangements.



Coin of Claudius Cæsar.

**The brethren which dwell in Judæa.** Here we have another designation for the Christians, which also is found repeatedly throughout the Acts of the Apostles (see ix. 30, xvii. 10, xxviii. 14, 15). In this place it is probably used to indicate the brotherly feeling which subsisted between the 'disciples' in Syria and Judæa, and which was exemplified in this charitable work.

**Ver. 30. Sent it to the elders.** Here first, and quite suddenly, there comes to view that ministry of the Christian Church, designated by the synonymous terms 'presbyter' and 'priest,' which has been a prolific occasion of controversy. A full account of the establishment of the diaconate has been given (chap. vi.). Not so in the case of the presbyterate. On this point Bishop Lightfoot remarks: 'While the diaconate was an entirely new creation, called forth by a special emergency, and developed by the progress of events, the early history of the presbyterate was different. If the sacred historian dwells at length on the institution of the lower office, but is silent about the first beginnings of the higher, the explanation seems to be, that the latter had not the claim of novelty like the former.' The Christian people were, in fact, at first not sharply distinguished from the Jews, who were organised into many synagogues (see Acts vi. 9). 'As soon as the expansion of the Church rendered some organisation necessary, it would form a "synagogue" of its own. The Christian congregation in Palestine long continued to be designated by this name (James ii. 2). . . . With the synagogue itself they would naturally, if not necessarily, adopt the normal government of a synagogue; and a body of elders or presbyters would be chosen to direct the religious worship, and partly also to watch over the temporal well-being of the society' (*Commentary on the Philip-  
pians; Essay on the Christian Ministry*, pp. 189, 190). Still it is probable that the adoption of the presbyterate, like the establishment of the diaconate, arose out of special circumstances; and the following observations by de Pressensé seem reasonable and just: 'Les apôtres étaient appelés à quitter fréquemment Jérusalem; la jeune Église, quoique richement pourvue des dons du Saint Esprit, ne pouvait se passer d'une certaine direction dans sa marche journalière et dans son culte. Le parti le plus sage était d'emprunter à la synagogue l'institution des anciens, si admirablement approprié à la nouvelle alliance. D'ailleurs, les sept diacres nommés primitivement avaient été plus que des diacres. Ils avaient enseigné avec puissance et rempli par anticipation la charge d'anciens. De même que le diaconat était sorti de l'apostolat, de même aussi la charge d'anciens se détache en quelque mesure du diaconat primitif, et aussi l'organisation de l'Église se perfectionnait en se spécialisant' (*Trois Premiers Siècles*, i. p. 414). It ought to be observed that, because the path of wisdom and prudence was followed in this matter, this does not detract from the belief that there was Divine guidance, but very much the contrary. After this time we find the presbyters, as a matter of course, part of the Church organisation in Jerusalem (see xv. 2). Elsewhere, also, we find presbyters established everywhere, as the result of missionary work (see xiv. 23, xx. 17; and comp. Tit. i. 5). The questions connected with the correlative term *ἐπισκοπὴ* and with Episcopacy will be dealt with in connection with xx. 28. The

Authorised Version is consistent in always rendering the word *ἐπισβύριος* by 'elder,' reserving the word 'priest' (which etymologically is the same) for *ἱερεύς*, as in Acts vi. 7, xiv. 13; Heb. viii. 4. This was essential, in order to avoid confusion. The 'priest' of the English Prayer-Book is (actually, as it is etymologically) the 'presbyter' of the New Testament. Otherwise in a church which appeals to Scripture there would be a ministry different from that which was originally instituted.

**By the hands of Barnabas and Saul.** This is the third instance of the co-operation of these two men. Every occasion on which they stand side by side is of extreme interest, and should be well marked (see Acts xiii. 1, 2, xv. 2, xv. 37; Gal. ii. 1, 9, 13).

#### EXCURSUS.

##### ON THE TWO ACCOUNTS OF THE CONVERSION OF CORNELIUS.

In the Acts of the Apostles there are two accounts of the conversion of Cornelius,—one given by St. Luke in the due sequence of his narrative, the other by St. Peter himself, under apologetic conditions, before the 'apostles and elders' at Jerusalem. On this circumstance Bishop Wordsworth has the following observation: 'A remarkable instance of *repetition*, showing the importance of the subject; and that the Holy Spirit does not disdain to use the same or similar words in relating the same events' (*The New Testament in the Original Greek, with Notes; The Acts*, p. 93). Turning now to a writer of a very different spirit, we find Reuss commenting on this fact as follows: 'La reproduction du récit détaillé de la conversion du centurion païen s'explique par les usages du style populaire de l'antiquité: L'Ancien Testament offre de nombreux exemples de cette prolixité' (*Histoire Apostolique*, p. 131). There is truth, doubtless, in both these criticisms: and they are not necessarily inconsistent with one another. But if we were to content ourselves with either of them or both of them, we should lose part of the instruction of this book of Holy Scripture, and should sacrifice an evidential argument of considerable value. It is probably good for our edification that we should gain our full impression of the whole history of this remarkable event by a thoughtful comparison of the two accounts which are given of it, while from such comparison there come to view strong proofs of the artless simplicity, the naturalness and perfect truthfulness of the whole story.

The method of the *Horæ Paulinæ* is in fact applicable, not merely to the comparison of one class of documents with another, with the view of proving the honesty of both by exhibiting minute consistency without contrivance, but likewise to the comparative criticism of different parts of the same document, by showing that 'undesigned coincidences' link them together, and thus give to them the coherency of truth. Paley himself applies this mode of reasoning to the Epistle to the Philippians, in the matter of Epaphroditus, without any comparison with the Acts of the Apostles. The parts of this book of the Acts which lend themselves with the greatest facility to this method of treatment, and do, in fact, most obviously invite it, as they most richly reward it, are the three accounts of St. Paul's conversion. That subject will be treated in an Excursus in its



proper place. Two of St. Paul's accounts were given under apologetic conditions: and so far there is a resemblance between his case and that of St. Peter. The materials for comparison, in St. Paul's case, are indeed much more abundant, especially as it presents three aspects of the same story; but in the instance before us, we have something more than the narrative of St. Luke, which we can put side by side with that of St. Peter. We have also to deal with the statement made to Peter by the messengers of Cornelius, and the statement made by Cornelius himself to that apostle. It is worth while to glance at these two other features which diversify the history, before we turn to the broader comparison.

The angel had given to Cornelius an exact description of the apostle, furnishing both his name and surname, and the name and employment of his host, and the exact position of the house (x. 5, 6). We find the messengers, on arriving in Joppa, making their inquiries exactly in this form (x. 17, 19). This was quite natural, while yet it is told in the most artless and easy manner. When they give their message to Peter, they describe the character of Cornelius in such a way as to win confidence and to produce persuasion; and especially they note the respect in which he was held by the Jews. This is just what we should expect from discreet men, such as Cornelius would select for such an errand (see vers. 7, 8); and it is just what St. Paul did when he described to his infuriated hearers in the temple court the character of Ananias at Damascus, and the high esteem in which he was held in that place (xxii. 12). When Peter came to Cæsarea and asked for fuller information from Cornelius himself, the centurion described the appearance of his heavenly visitant, and said that he 'stood' before him 'within his house' (x. 30). These particulars we should not otherwise have known; and they were evidently adapted to convince Peter that there had been no illusion. Another point which the direct narrative does not contain is, that Cornelius was *praying* when the angel visited him. This circumstance was obviously of great moment for producing confidence in the apostle's mind. And once more the exact description of the apostle, with his name and surname, and the name of his host, and the position of the house, is repeated (x. 32). Such coincidences are like threads, not perceptible at first sight, but perceived on closer examination to give coherence and strength to the whole texture of the narrative; and yet hardly any critic would venture to say that they have been ingeniously inserted for the purpose of producing this effect on the mind of the reader.

Similar remarks might be made on the manner in which St. Peter speaks to Cornelius when he first meets him, on his dignified reticence as regards the particulars of his trance, and on the candour with which he confesses, in general terms, that God had taught him to take a new view of the relations between Jews and Gentiles. But

the chief point of interest in this comparative criticism lies in the variations observable when we set St. Peter's apologetic statement at Jerusalem (xi. 4-17) side by side with the direct narrative contained in the preceding chapter. The problem he has now to solve is, how to present his recent experience persuasively and yet truthfully. We are perhaps hardly to expect in this apostle the tact and versatility which were characteristic of St. Paul. It is enough, if we find him earnest, judicious, and natural, and if his mode of putting the case suits the conditions of the moment. Now he is careful to give to the whole history its solemn religious aspect, omitting mere details, which are of no moment for his argument, though they are interesting and indeed important parts of the narrative, considered as a mere narrative. Expounding the matter 'by order from the beginning,' he says that he was *praying* when the trance occurred (ver. 5), that the voice which spake to him came 'from heaven' (ver. 9). He marks the providential coincidence of the arrival of the three men at the critical moment, and the distinct command of the Holy Spirit, that he should go with them (vers. 11, 12). He speaks emphatically of 'the angel' (ver. 13). He states that the phenomena which followed were similar to those at Pentecost (ver. 15); he describes the recollection of the words of the Lord Jesus which came over him (ver. 16), and he concludes by saying that God had given to the faith of these Gentiles what He had given to the faith of the earliest Hebrew Christians, and that to withhold obedience in this matter would be a presumptuous hindrance of God (ver. 17). The work was God's work, not his. This is his main argument, but it is worth while also to note what he adds and what he omits in his recital. He adds that the great sheet, with its strange contents, moved towards him and came close to him (ver. 5), and moreover that he 'fastened his eyes on it and considered it' (ver. 6). Such things tended to prove the reality and definiteness of the Divine communication. He omits the mention of the house-top, the hour of the day, the preparation of his meal. These were merely, from his present point of view, circumstantial details, however valuable they might be for the historian. And finally, we have once again, from St. Peter's own lips, the exact designation, which we have met with three times before at the critical points of this narrative: 'Simon, whose surname is Peter.' In this was expressed, not only a new proof of the literal truth of the facts, but his sense of an individual calling and a personal responsibility for the accomplishment of this great task of introducing the Gentiles, on equal terms with the Jews, into the Christian Church. His speech on this occasion, besides being of value to the end for which it has here been examined, furnishes to us an instructive example of that which is enjoined by his brother apostle, 'Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man' (Col. iv. 6).

## CHAPTER XII.

*The Last Acts of the Last King of Israel.*

- 1 NOW about that time <sup>a</sup> Herod the king <sup>b</sup> stretched forth  
2 <sup>c</sup> his hands, to vex <sup>d</sup> certain of the church. And he killed  
3 <sup>e</sup> James the brother of <sup>f</sup> John <sup>g</sup> with the sword. And <sup>h</sup> because  
4 he saw it pleased the Jews, he <sup>i</sup> proceeded further to take Peter  
5 also. (Then <sup>j</sup> were <sup>k</sup> the days of unleavened bread.) And  
6 when he had apprehended him, he put <sup>l</sup> him in <sup>m</sup> prison, and  
7 delivered <sup>n</sup> him to four <sup>o</sup> quaternions of soldiers to keep him; <sup>p</sup>  
8 intending after <sup>q</sup> 'Easter' to bring him forth to the people.  
9 Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made  
10 without ceasing <sup>r</sup> of the church unto God for him. And when  
11 <sup>s</sup> Herod would have brought him forth, <sup>t</sup> the same night Peter  
12 was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with <sup>u</sup> two chains:  
13 and <sup>v</sup> the keepers before the door kept the prison. And behold,  
14 <sup>w</sup> the angel of the Lord <sup>x</sup> came upon <sup>y</sup> him, and a light shined in  
15 the prison: <sup>z</sup> and <sup>aa</sup> he smote Peter on the side, and raised him  
16 up, saying, Arise up quickly. And <sup>ab</sup> his chains fell off from <sup>ac</sup> his  
17 hands. And the angel said unto him, Gird thyself, and <sup>ad</sup> bind  
18 on thy sandals. And so he did. And he saith unto him, Cast  
19 thy garment about thee, and follow me. And he went out,  
20 and followed him; and wist not that it was true which was  
21 done by the angel; but thought <sup>ae</sup> he saw <sup>af</sup> a vision. When  
22 they were past the first and the second ward, they came unto  
23 the iron gate that leadeth unto the city; <sup>ag</sup> which opened to  
24 them of his <sup>ah</sup> own accord: and they went out, and passed on  
25 through one street; and forthwith the angel departed from him.  
26 And when Peter was <sup>ai</sup> come to himself, he said, Now I know  
27 of a surety, <sup>aj</sup> that the Lord hath sent <sup>ak</sup> his angel, and <sup>al</sup> hath  
28 delivered me out of the hand of <sup>am</sup> Herod, and <sup>an</sup> from all <sup>ao</sup> the  
29 expectation of the people of the Jews. And when he had  
30 <sup>ap</sup> considered <sup>aq</sup> the thing, <sup>ar</sup> he came to the house of Mary the  
31 mother of <sup>as</sup> John, whose surname was <sup>at</sup> Mark; where many  
32 were gathered together <sup>au</sup> praying.
- 13 And as Peter <sup>av</sup> knocked at the door of <sup>aw</sup> the gate, <sup>ax</sup> a damsel  
14 came to hearken, <sup>ay</sup> named Rhoda. And when she knew Peter's  
15 voice, she opened not <sup>az</sup> the gate <sup>ba</sup> for gladness, but ran in, and  
16 <sup>bb</sup> injure <sup>bc</sup> The older authorities read, 'those were the days,' etc.  
17 <sup>bd</sup> to keep him in ward <sup>be</sup> the passover <sup>bf</sup> fervently  
18 <sup>bg</sup> was on the point of bringing him forth <sup>bh</sup> a light shined in the room  
19 <sup>bi</sup> its own accord <sup>bj</sup> in very deed <sup>bk</sup> hath sent out  
20 <sup>bl</sup> having become aware of it  
21 <sup>bm</sup> The older authorities omit 'Peter;' the rendering would then be, 'as he  
22 knocked.'  
23 <sup>bn</sup> or better, 'to answer.'

<sup>a</sup> Vers. 6, 11, 19, 20, 21 only.  
<sup>b</sup> So ch. iv. 3, v. 18, xxi. 27.  
<sup>c</sup> Mat. iv. 21, x. 2, etc.  
<sup>d</sup> See ch. i. 13  
<sup>e</sup> Mat. xx. 23, etc.  
<sup>f</sup> So ch. xxiv. 27, xxv. 9.  
<sup>g</sup> See Lu. xix. 11.  
<sup>h</sup> Ex. xii. 14, 15, xxiii. 15; ch. xx. 6.  
<sup>i</sup> See Lu. xxi. 12.  
<sup>j</sup> Jo. xix. 23.  
<sup>k</sup> Gk. a. Mk. xiv. 1, etc.  
<sup>l</sup> Cp. ver. 3.  
<sup>m</sup> 2 Cor. i. 11; Eph. vi. 18.  
<sup>n</sup> Ch. xxi. 33.  
<sup>o</sup> So ver. 23; Mat. i. 20, 24, ii. 13, 19, iv. 11, xxviii. 2; Mk. i. 13; Lu. i. 11, 26, ii. 9-15, xxii. 43; Jo. v. 4, xx. 12; ch. v. 19, viii. 26, x. 3, xi. 13, xxvii. 22.  
<sup>p</sup> See Lu. ii. 9.  
<sup>q</sup> So 1 Kings xix. 7.  
<sup>r</sup> So ch. xvi. 26.  
<sup>s</sup> Mk. vi. 9 (Gk.).  
<sup>t</sup> Ps. cxxvi. 1.  
<sup>u</sup> Ch. ix. 10, 12, x. 3, 17, 19, xi. 5, xvi. 9, 10, xviii. 9.  
<sup>v</sup> So ch. v. 19, xvi. 26.  
<sup>w</sup> So Lu. xv. 17.  
<sup>x</sup> See ver. 7.  
<sup>y</sup> So Job v. 19; Ps. xxxiii. 18, 19, xxxiv. 19, 22, xxxvii. 40, xli. 1, 2, xci. 3, xcvi. 10; 2 Cor. i. 10.  
<sup>z</sup> Ver. 3.  
<sup>aa</sup> Ch. xiv. 6 (Gk.).  
<sup>ab</sup> Ver. 25; ch. xiii. 5, 13, xv. 37.  
<sup>ac</sup> Ver. 25; ch. xv. 37, 39; Col. iv. 10; 2 Tim. iv. 11; Philem. 24; 1 Pet. v. 13.  
<sup>ad</sup> Ver. 5.  
<sup>ae</sup> See Lu. xvi. 20.  
<sup>af</sup> Jo. xviii. 16, 17.  
<sup>ag</sup> Lu. xxiv. 41 (Gk.).

- 15 told how Peter stood before <sup>o</sup> the gate. And they said unto her, <sup>a</sup> Thou art mad. But she <sup>i</sup> constantly affirmed that it was <sup>a</sup> *even* so. Then said they, It is <sup>a</sup> his angel. But Peter continued knocking: and when they had opened *the door*, and saw him, 17 they were astonished. But he, <sup>i</sup> beckoning unto them with the hand to hold their peace, declared unto them how the Lord had brought him out of the prison. And he said, *Go show* <sup>14</sup> these *things* unto <sup>m</sup> James, and to <sup>n</sup> the brethren. And he departed, 18 and went into another place. Now as soon as it was day, there was no small stir among the soldiers, what was become of 19 Peter. And when <sup>o</sup> Herod had sought for him, and found *him* not, he <sup>s</sup> examined the keepers, <sup>15</sup> and commanded that *they* should be put to death. <sup>16</sup> And he went down from Judea to <sup>o</sup> Cæsarea, and *there* abode.
- 20 And <sup>o</sup> Herod <sup>17</sup> was highly displeased with them of <sup>o</sup> Tyre and Sidon: but they came with one accord to him, and, <sup>s</sup> having made Blastus the king's chamberlain their friend, desired <sup>18</sup> peace; because <sup>i</sup> their country was nourished by the king's 21 *country*. And upon a set day <sup>o</sup> Herod, arrayed <sup>19</sup> in royal apparel, <sup>20</sup> sat upon his <sup>n</sup> throne, and made an oration unto them. 22 And the people gave a shout, *saying*, *It is* the voice of a god, 23 and not of a man. And immediately *the* <sup>21</sup> angel of the Lord <sup>v</sup> smote him, because <sup>w</sup> he gave not God the glory: and he was 24 eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost. But <sup>x</sup> the word of God 25 grew and multiplied. <sup>y</sup> And <sup>z</sup> Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem, when they had fulfilled *their* <sup>a</sup> ministry, and <sup>w</sup> took with *them* <sup>22</sup> <sup>b</sup> John, whose surname was <sup>b</sup> Mark.

<sup>14</sup> report these things to James<sup>16</sup> that they should be led away to execution<sup>17</sup> *The older authorities omit* 'Herod.'<sup>19</sup> robed himself<sup>20</sup> and sat<sup>21</sup> an angel<sup>15</sup> the guards<sup>18</sup> they requested<sup>22</sup> taking with them

Ver. 1. **Now about that time.** The events related in this twelfth chapter took place in the year 44. Paul and Barnabas were then on their mission, bearing alms from the Christians in Antioch to the Church of Jerusalem and Palestine. The famine alluded to (chap. xi. 29, 30) happened after the death of Herod.

**Herod the king.** Herod Agrippa 1. was the grandson of Herod the Great, and was brought up at Rome with Drusus and Claudius, but he fell into disgrace with the Emperor Tiberius towards the end of his reign. He was imprisoned, but released by Caligula on his accession. The new emperor treated him with distinguished honour, changing his iron chain for one of gold of equal weight. He bestowed on him the tetrarchies of Philip and Lysanias, with the title of king. To these countries this emperor subsequently added the territories ruled over by Herod Antipas, when the prince with his wife Herodias fell into disgrace with Rome. King Herod Agrippa had the good fortune to render

some considerable services to Claudius, who in return, on his accession to the empire, added to the extensive dominions bestowed by his predecessor Caligula, the wealthy provinces of Judea and Samaria; so that, in the year 41, this prince ruled over a kingdom equal in extent to the dominions of the great Herod his grandfather.

The descent of the princes of the Herod family has in all times been the subject of much dispute. One tradition represents Herod 1. as the grandson of a slave; another, probably invented by the jealous partisans of the royal house, relates how the Herods were descended from one of the noble Hebrew families which returned from Babylon. It is far more probable, however, that they were of Idumæan descent. These Idumæans had been conquered and brought over to Judaism by John Hyrcanus B.C. 130, and from that time they seem to have been steadily constant to the Hebrew religion, and to have styled themselves Jews.

King Herod Agrippa 1. in many particulars adopted a line of policy quite different from that

followed by the other princes of his house. His wish was in all things to conciliate and win the heart of the Jewish people.

He appears to have succeeded to a considerable extent, and Josephus describes him as a generous and able monarch. The Jewish historian evidently wrote of this Herod with a strong bias in his favour, and his partial estimate of his character must be received with great caution. A curious legend related by Jost (*Geschichte des Judenthums*) well illustrates the ruling passion of the king, and the warm feelings of the Jews towards him: "Once, when reading in a public service (Deut. xvii. 15) 'one from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over thee: thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, which is not thy brother,' Agrippa burst into tears, whereupon the people cried out, 'Be not distressed, Agrippa, thou art our brother.'"

At this time both the ruling parties in Jerusalem were bitterly hostile to the followers of Jesus. The Pharisee who at first, in his hatred to the Sadducee who filled the chief place in the Great Council at the time of the trial and crucifixion of Jesus, was inclined to favour the new sect, had come to dread the rapidly-increasing congregations of the Nazarenes. Pharisee and Sadducee now joined together in a common hatred of a sect whose rapidly-advancing prosperity was dangerous to the very existence of Judaism.

The 'rest' which the Church enjoyed (Acts ix.



Coin of Herod Agrippa I.

31) was in great measure owing to the hostile and insulting policy of Rome in the reign of Caligula. The Jewish rulers were too uneasy and alarmed for themselves and the Temple to have any leisure to devise a special persecution against the followers of Jesus; but now a new era had commenced for Israel. Once more and (though they knew it not) for the last time, the ancient monarchy was united under the sceptre of one sovereign, who, thanks to his private friendship with the emperor, was allowed to rule the ancient people, and who, while still under the protection of the awful name of Rome, was apparently independent: and, as it happened, this sovereign so favoured of Rome was intensely desirous to win for himself popular favour among the Jews. No policy was more likely to secure this, than to persecute and attempt to stamp out that increasing sect which was so hated and dreaded by all the Jewish party rulers. This was the reason why 'Herod stretched forth his hand to vex certain of the Church.' The persecution of A.D. 44 was the greatest danger to which the Church of Christ was ever exposed. In that year its relentless enemies, the judges of the Sanhedrim, both Pharisee and Sadducee, were united against their common Christian foes. For a brief moment, after centuries of captivity and bitter national misfortune, a Jew was again master in the Holy Land, a favourite of Cæsar, and one who intensely longed to be considered a true Jew, was king. It seemed likely that the whole power of the nation, supported by the authority of Rome in

the background, would be devoted to the destruction of the Christian sect.

In the year 44 the work was begun in good earnest. As far as men could see, there was no help for the doomed Nazarene. Before the year closed, however, the king—from whom the Jews hoped so much—was dead; stricken in the height of his power and magnificence by a terrible and mysterious disease, King Herod passed from the scene. The policy of Rome, or the caprice of the Cæsar, gave him no successor; once more the Holy Land was degraded to the rank of a mere province of the great empire. No Jewish sovereign after King Herod's death has reigned over the Jewish people.

The rulers in Jerusalem were never able again to organize a general persecution of the Christians, and after the death of Herod, and the consequent downfall of their hopes, the relations between the Roman and the Jew became each year more hostile. In less than thirty years from this time we read of the awful fate of the sacred city, and the final dispersion of the people.

Ver. 2. **And he killed James the brother of John.** After eleven years of patient noble work, the brother of John received one portion of the high reward which Salome had asked for her sons (Matt. xx. 21). He was the first of the Twelve to drink of the cup of which Christ drank, and to be baptized with the baptism with which He was baptized. James the Elder, the son of Zebedee the fisherman of Galilee, and of his wife Salome, the brother of John, was marked out by the Lord early in His ministry for a chief place among the future leaders of His Church. The chosen companions of Jesus, the two sons of Zebedee, with Peter, were alone permitted to witness the raising of the little daughter of Jairus from the dead,—they only were present at the mysterious Transfiguration of the Lord,—they were the solitary witnesses of the agony in Gethsemane.

The name of these chosen brothers, 'Sons of Thunder,' gives us the clue to the reason of the Master's choice. This singular name bears witness to the burning and impetuous spirit which later in John found vent in his Gospel, and still more in the thunder-voices of his Apocalypse; and with James in those bold vigorous words in which, so often during his eleven years of ministry to the churches of the Holy Land, he had caused the thunder of the Divine displeasure against hypocrisy, formalism, and darker sins than these to be heard. His burning words, backed up by the noble testimony of a saintly life, no doubt won him the proud honour among the Twelve of the first martyr crown. Chrysostom tells us that Herod, wishful to gratify the Jews, could think of no gift likely to be so acceptable to the people as the life of one so honoured and yet so dreaded. The very few words with which the writer of the 'Acts' relates the fate of this distinguished Christian leader have been supplemented by a great mass of legendary stories, which connect the martyred apostle with Spain. These legends relate how the remains of James were translated to Compostella, and explain how it came to pass that he was adopted as the favourite saint, the hero of romance, and the protector of the chivalry of Spain. One tradition only is well supported, and we may accept it as most probably historically true. Clement of Alexandria (A.D. 195) relates it, and expressly states that the account was given

him by those who went before him. Clement relates 'how the prosecutor of St. James was so moved by witnessing his bold confession that he declared himself a Christian on the spot; accused and accuser were therefore hurried off together, and on the road the latter begged St. James to grant him forgiveness. The apostle after a moment's hesitation kissed him, saying, "Peace be to thee," and they were both beheaded together.'

**With the sword.** This mode of punishment was regarded among the Jews as a disgraceful death. Various reasons have been given for the extreme brevity of the account of the martyrdom of one so eminent in the early Church. Meyer suggests that in the original plan of the writer of the 'Acts' a third book was contemplated. The *first*, the 'Gospel of St. Luke: an Account of the Life and Teaching of the Lord; the *second*, the 'Acts: the History of the Working of Peter and Paul; the *third*, which was never undertaken, was to be the relation of the 'Acts' of the other apostles. But this, though an ingenious, is a purely arbitrary supposition. Wordsworth's note here is very striking: 'It was no part of St. Luke's plan to write a martyrology. His work is the book of their acts in life, not of their sufferings by death. He does not describe deathbeds,—the martyrdom of life is what he teaches; he fixes the reader's attention on that, and thus leads us to conclude that they who live as martyrs will die as martyrs, and that the true way to die well is to live well. . . . Having described one martyrdom, that of St. Stephen, . . . he leaves his readers to infer that the same Spirit who encouraged and animated the first martyr in his death, was with the whole of the noble army of martyrs who followed him on the road of suffering to glory; he therefore will not describe the martyrdom of St. James . . . nor even of St. Paul.'

**Ver. 3. And because he saw it pleased the Jews.** See note on ver. 1, in which the policy and character of King Herod are discussed at length.

**Then were the days of unleavened bread.** During seven days at the feast of Passover no leaven was allowed in the houses of the Jews. St. Jerome on Ezekiel xliii., quoted by Wordsworth, appears to say that St. James was martyred on the second day of the Passover, *i.e.* on the 15th Nisan, the same day as the crucifixion of the Lord. The precise date (15th Nisan) is probably fanciful, as Jewish custom was opposed to judicial sentences being carried out during the feast. The martyrdom more likely took place just before the feast of Passover, some twenty-one years after the crucifixion of Jesus. The son of Zebedee and Salome, when he asked that he should drink of the Master's cup and be baptized with the Master's baptism (St. Matt. xx. 21), then little dreamed that the prayer would so soon be granted.

This Passover was the gloomiest and saddest the Church had kept since the great Pentecost morning: one leading personage had been taken away from the little society by a bloody death, another was in prison and condemned. The absolute king of Israel united with the Sanhedrim, the relentless enemies of the Christian sect, in a determination to crush the followers of Jesus.

These days of gloom must have reminded *some* of that company of another Passover, eleven years before, when the Master they loved so well lay dead in His grave; but they must have remembered

well, too, the joyous Easter which succeeded that awful Passover, when the Master, loving as ever, but robed with new robes of life and majesty, gathered His mourning friends together again; for we find them asking *from Him*, their risen Friend,—not *from King Herod*,—Peter's life, for 'prayer without ceasing of the Church was made to God for Peter' (ver. 5).

**Ver. 4. And delivered him to four quaternions of soldiers.** That is, to four bands of soldiers, each band consisting of four. These were to relieve each other in guarding the prisoner. The Roman practice of dividing the night into four watches of three hours each was generally adopted by the Jews of this period.

**Intending after Easter.** (Literally, 'after the Passover.') King Herod wished to be considered a strict observer of the law. The more rigid Jews, we learn from the Talmud, deemed it unlawful to defile their solemn feasts with executions (see St. John xviii. 28, where this dread of defilement affected the murderers of Jesus).

**To bring him forth to the people.** That is, for trial and execution.

**Ver. 5. Peter therefore was kept in prison; but prayer was made without ceasing of the church to God for him.** This verse is introduced between the account of the arrest and the miraculous deliverance. It suggests the thought that the angel's interference was without doubt the result of the prayer.

**Ver. 6. The same night.** That is, the night before the day fixed for the execution. Peter was not missed by the guards till sunrise—about six o'clock (see ver. 18). It was, then, in the fourth watch, some time between three and six o'clock, that the angel-presence entered the prison chamber. Peter was chained to two soldiers, while the other two as sentinels kept a useless watch at the prison-room door.

**Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains.** It was the usual Roman custom to chain a prisoner only to one soldier. Meyer supposes that in the case of Peter the additional severity of the double chain was adopted as an extra precaution to secure an important prisoner lying under sentence of death.

**Ver. 7. And, behold, the angel of the Lord.** This should be rendered, 'an angel of the Lord,' one of that glorious host of Spirits of whom mention so often is made in this book of the 'Acts' with reference to their office toward the faithful servants of God.

**A light shined in the prison.** In the deep darkness of that early spring morning, a strange light from a radiant form suddenly lit up the cell, with the sleeping figures of the two soldiers and their prisoner.

**He smote Peter on the side—in order to rouse him from slumber.** In the beautiful fancy of Keble, the wearied apostle, sleeping as he thought his last sleep, and dreaming of the glorious witness to his Lord he was to witness when the day dawned, would naturally mistake the angel's touch and voice for the summons to execution:

'His dream is changed—the tyrant's voice  
Calls to that last of glorious deeds;  
But as he rises to rejoice,  
Not Herod, but an angel leads.'

—*Christian Year*, 'St. Peter's Day.'

**Ver. 8. Gird thyself, and bind on thy sandals.** The angel gives these various directions—1st, to

indicate the reality of the appearance; 2d, to show there was no need for haste. The prisoner was to arise at once; he would find the iron fetters which bound him to the two sleeping soldiers already snapped by the Divine touch. He was to tighten the girdle which confined his tunic, to strap on the light sandals he had laid aside before he slept. 'Tarry not to bind on your sandals' was a usual saying among the Greeks when they urged one to hasten. He was to throw round him his heavy cloak as a protection against the sharp air of the early spring morning.

Vers. 9, 10. **And he went out, and followed him. . . . When they were past the first and the second ward, they came unto the iron gate that leadeth unto the city.** Silently, without a word, the radiant Messenger from heaven and the amazed apostle passed through the galleries of the fortress (the prison in which Peter was confined was most probably the tower of Antonia), past the first sleeping guard, then past the second, then through the great gates of iron which communicated with the city beyond, down a flight of seven steps, as one most ancient Ms. (Codex D) tells us, into the street; and there the angel passed back into the unseen, leaving Peter alone, but free.

Ver. 11. **And when Peter was come to himself.** Up to this time, all that had happened had seemed to Peter as a dream; but now, when he stood alone in the midst of the city, and he called to mind distinctly all the varied circumstances of his deliverance, and the angel's calm, deliberate directions, he at once with deep gratitude recognised *whence* came his deliverance,—he perceived that the radiant Messenger was from his Master.

Ver. 12. **He came to the house of Mary.** It was natural that Peter should betake himself to Mary's house, for it is evident that between this family and himself there existed some close tie of friendship. Mary, we believe, was the sister of the famous Barnabas the Cypriote (see Col. iv. 10), who, in the first days of the Church's existence, sold a portion of his property and gave it to the apostles (Acts iv. 36, 37), and who subsequently introduced Paul to the apostles at Jerusalem (Acts ix. 27). The family was evidently one of some consideration, and possessed considerable wealth. The house of Mary was large enough, for instance, to form one of the meeting-places for the believers of Jerusalem. It is probable that Saul and Barnabas had already arrived in the city on the charitable mission alluded to in Acts xi. 30; in which case, on this solemn night of prayer, no doubt Peter met in the house of Mary, among many other Christian brethren, Barnabas, Saul of Tarsus, and Mark.

**The mother of John, whose surname was Mark.** This Mark is generally identified by the early Church with Mark the Evangelist: he was nephew of Barnabas (Col. iv. 10), and his friend and companion (Acts xii. 25, xv. 39). A close connection and warm friendship from the earliest times seems to have existed between Peter and Barnabas. The influence of Peter over Barnabas is alluded to in the Galatian Epistle (ii. 13), written in the year 56–57, some twenty-two years after Barnabas' first generous gift to the Church of Jerusalem. No doubt it was owing to this long friendship with the uncle, that John Mark, the nephew of Barnabas, became so intimately associated with Peter, who in his First Epistle even

calls him his 'son' (1 Pet. v. 13). The early Church believed that St. Mark's Gospel was in reality the Gospel of St. Peter, and that Mark simply put down the words and memories of his master and friend the Apostle Peter.

**Where many were gathered together praying.** These Christians were gathered together in the still hours of the night, perhaps for fear of the Jews, but more probably on account of the extreme peril which menaced the Christian cause. The special object, however, for which this solemn assembly was convened, was to pray for that dear brother and sainted teacher who was to die a martyr's death when the next day dawned. These nocturnal assemblies of Christians for prayer were continued in many places in more quiet times, partly owing to the solemnity which belongs to these still hours, partly owing to a deep-rooted persuasion that the Lord Jesus would come again during the night. Wordsworth beautifully writes on this verse: 'Herod's soldiers were watching under arms at the door of the prison; Christ's soldiers were watching unto prayer in the house of Mary. Christ's soldiers are more powerful with their arms than Herod's soldiers with theirs: they unlock the prison-doors and bring Peter to the house of Mary.'

Ver. 13. **And as Peter knocked.** Peter's knock startled and alarmed the anxious, troubled assembly. It suggested fresh arrests and new cares and anxieties.

**At the door of the gate.** The door was most probably that small outer door by which one entered through the large gate from the street into the court or area where the house was.

**A damsel came to hearken, named Rhoda—** or, as we should render the Greek name, 'Rose.' The names of plants and flowers were favourite names for the daughters of Israel. So Susannah signifies 'a lily,' Esther 'a myrtle,' Tamar 'a palm.'

Ver. 14. **And when she knew Peter's voice, she opened not the gate for gladness.** So eager was Rhoda, the servant, perhaps the slave, of Mary, to make the others assembled there that night partakers of the great joy she felt in beholding Peter again alive and free, that she ran back and forgot to open the door when she heard his well-known, loved voice.

This is a striking incident, and shows how the apostle was loved by all orders and ranks. Chrysostom draws attention here to the fact that slaves and servants in the early Church shared in the hopes and fears of those socially above them.

Ver. 15. **Then said they, It is his angel.** Some have tried to explain away this difficult passage by suggesting that the word rendered 'angel' in the original signified 'messenger' simply; but this is most improbable, for how could they have expected a messenger from the prison at such an hour? Besides, Rhoda knew the voice of Peter.

It is evident that the Christians (or at least some of them) who were present that night in Mary's house believed that Peter's guardian angel had assumed his voice and was standing before the door. The whole question of the 'unseen ministry of angels' is a very mysterious one; some of the weightiest of the fathers have taught definitely that every believer has a guardian angel. So Basil and Chrysostom. Very little is told us concerning these Beings and their work and office among us in Holy Scripture. Our Lord's words (Matt. xviii. 10), 'I say unto you, that in heaven

'heir angels do always behold the face of My Father which is in heaven,' simply teach us that these blessed Ones are concerned more or less closely with the words and works of men; they tell us, too, that very slender is the partition which separates the world we know from the other unseen world,—that the spirit-world, which seems so infinitely far, is perhaps all the while close beside us. But the guarded reticence of all inspired teaching on this question warns us from inquiring too closely into a mysterious subject with an aimless curiosity.

For the comfort of believers the Master has told them of the existence of these blessed spirits, and of the intense interest they take in every life battling here with evil; more than this the Holy Spirit has not vouchsafed to disclose. The whole subject of angelic ministry has been exhaustively discussed in Bishop Bull's noble sermons on the 'Existence of Angels,' and on the 'Office of the Holy Angels towards the Faithful' (Bull's *Works*, vol. i., Sermons xi. xii.).

**Ver. 17. Beckoning unto them with the hand.** These are evidently the words of an eye-witness of Peter's visit to the house of Mary after his escape from prison.

**Go show these things unto James.** James the brother of the Lord is here specially mentioned, as he held a peculiar position of authority among the Jerusalem Christians (Acts xv. 13). For a full account of this eminent man, see note on chap. xv. 12.

**And he departed and went into another place.** It is most probable that he left the city for a time, as after his miraculous deliverance he would not needlessly expose himself to fresh danger. We find Peter again at Jerusalem a few years after this: the bitter persecution was doubtless stopped after the death of King Herod Agrippa, which took place in the summer of this same year, 44. Very many Romish writers believe that Peter after leaving Jerusalem proceeded to Rome, and there laid the foundations of the Church in that city. The total absence, however, of any reference to Peter and his work in the Epistle to the Roman Church, written by Paul about the year 58, seems fatal to any such theory. Peter must have visited Rome at a much later period.

**Ver. 18. As soon as it was day.** The angel's visit and Peter's escape must have taken place during the last watch of the night, between the hours of three and six; otherwise the absence of the prisoner would have been discovered *before* the break of day, when the guard of four soldiers was changed.

**There was no small stir among the soldiers what was become of Peter.** The inquiry on the following morning in the fortress endeavoured to discover whether any possible explanation could be given of the strange escape of the important prisoner who had been so carefully guarded.

Gloag remarks that we are not to think this execution of the guards an extraordinary act of cruelty on the part of Herod. A soldier to whom a prisoner was entrusted, and who permitted his escape, was guilty of a capital offence.

**Ver. 19. And he went down from Jerusalem to Cæsarea.** No doubt bitterly disappointed at not being able to comply with the Jewish desire in the matter of putting to death the famous Nazarene leader, Herod left his Jewish capital for a short season, as he thought, and went down to Cæsarea, then the second city in his broad

kingdom. Josephus mentions a desire to be present at games to be celebrated in honour of Claudius Cæsar as a reason for this removal of the king to Cæsarea.

**Ver. 20. And Herod was highly displeased with them of Tyre and Sidon.** The angry feeling which had sprung up between King Herod and the inhabitants of the Phœnician cities was no doubt owing to the commercial rivalry which existed between these ancient ports and the newly built and highly favoured Roman harbour of Cæsarea.

**Blastus the king's chamberlain.** Not a Hebrew, but a man evidently from his name of Roman extraction. He occupied the confidential position of principal chamberlain to the king. It must be remembered that Herod had resided much in Rome; hence the probability of his having Romans about him in the principal positions of his court.

**Desired peace, because their country was nourished by the king's country.** The narrow strip of Phœnician territory was of course utterly inadequate to furnish corn, oil, and other necessities for the important maritime cities of Tyre and Sidon. From very early times the neighbouring fertile regions were in the habit of furnishing supplies for the markets of Tyre; Solomon, for instance, sent gifts of wheat and oil to Hiram of Tyre (1 Kings v. 11). Ezekiel (chap. xxvii. 17) tells how 'Israel and Judah were the merchants of Tyre, and traded with her in wheat and honey, oil and balm.' Herod no doubt in his anger forbade all intercommunication and traffic between Israel and the Phœnician cities. Very likely the first scarcity, the beginning of that great famine predicted in Acts xi. 28, was already felt to some extent in Phœnicia and Palestine. The famine in question began in the year 44, and lasted three or four years, occasioning terrible sufferings.

**Ver. 21. And upon a set day Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat upon his throne, and made an oration unto them.** Some fifty years before, Herod the Great, grandfather of the present king, had established a festival in honour of the Roman Cæsar, to be observed every five years (Quinquennialia).

This festival was kept in the month of August in the year 44: the king had appointed the second day of the festival to receive the Tyrian ambassadors, and to convey to them his gracious assurance of favour and pardon. Josephus, whose graphic account of the incident well supplements the brief stern summary of the 'Acts,' tells us that on that morning of the 2d August the king entered the vast, crowded theatre of Cæsarea, clothed in a magnificent dress of silver tissue; the sun's rays fell on the royal robes of silver, and the eyes of the beholders were dazzled with the brightness which surrounded the monarch. Herod then from his throne spoke to the assembled multitude, the majority of whom were idolaters,—Cæsarea was almost exclusively a Gentile city. Courty voices among the crowd cried aloud that the monarch who stood before them in all his magnificence was no man, but a god; and the crowd, dazzled with the brilliancy of his appearance, took up the shout, saying, 'It is the voice of a god and not of a man;' and the king, whose pride had been that he belonged to the idol-aborning Hebrew people, was well pleased with the impious homage.

While listening approvingly to this blasphemous flattery, the king suddenly looked up and saw an owl sitting on a rope above his head, and immediately understood that the bird was the messenger to him of evil tidings (an old prediction he had heard at Rome had warned him that the appearance of this bird would betoken grave evil to him). He fell into a deep melancholy, and very soon was seized with agonizing pain in his bowels: he then said to the audience, 'I whom you called a god am commanded now to depart this life;' and the pain becoming more violent, he was carried into his palace, where he lingered in extreme suffering for five days and then expired. It was in the midst of the impious shouts of flattery that the writer of the 'Acts' says 'the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory.' The Holy Ghost in the sacred record of the 'Acts' simply confirms the historical account written by a hand friendly to Herod but hostile to the Christian cause; but while confirming the record of the historian, the writer of the 'Acts' discloses to us the invisible agency by which the great events related were produced.

After the death of King Herod, the crowds who shouted their impious praises of him on the day of the festival openly rejoiced over his death, heaping cowardly insults on his mourning daughters.

Ver. 23. **He was eaten of worms.** Josephus speaks of violent and torturing pains. The writer of the 'Acts,' whom we believe to have been identical with Luke, the beloved physician, gives a more accurate description of the mysterious and terrible disease which closed the brilliant career of the 'last king of Israel.' It has been suggested that this fearful malady is especially reserved by God for princes who have cruelly misused their power over their subjects. The instances we possess of victims to this disease are few in number:—Antiochus Epiphanes, who bitterly persecuted the Jews; Pheretima, Queen of Cyrene, celebrated for her cruelty; C. L. Herminianus, Roman governor of Cappadocia, who cruelly persecuted the Christians (see *Tertul. ad Scapulam*); and the Emperor Galerius, the last persecutor of the Church (Eusebius). To this list Niebuhr adds the name of Philip II.

The following table shows the descendants of King Herod Agrippa I.:—

HEROD AGRIPPA I.			
HEROD AGRIPPA II. This prince ruled over a comparatively small kingdom. Paul pleaded before him at Cæsarea. See Acts xxv.	BERNICE. Married Herod, King of Chalcis; then Polemo, King of Cilicia.	MARIAMNE.	DRUSILLA. Married Felix, the Roman Governor.

After the death of Herod Agrippa I., Jerusalem was never ruled again by a native prince; a Roman procurator in Jerusalem, Cuspius Fadus, was appointed by the Government of Rome. A portion of the kingdom of his father was given to the young prince, who, under the name of Herod Agrippa II., received from Claudius, who was personally attached to the boy, the kingly title. But this sovereign, of whom in the 'Acts' we shall hear more, never seems to have adopted, as did his father, the feelings of the Jewish patriot party.

Ver. 24. **But the word of God grew and multiplied.**

In strong contrast to the mournful end of the powerful enemy of the Christians, the Church of Christ kept on increasing in numbers and in power. These few rejoicing words sound like the Christians' victory hymn: the powerful king who hated the Christians and their God is eaten of worms, while the Church of Christ holds on unchecked its quiet but triumphal way. Again the sufferings of the faithful had done their work, and fresh believers were added in numbers to a Church which could teach men and women to suffer and to rejoice; and Chrysostom loves to tell us how the blood of James, the friend of Christ and the martyr of Christ, had watered the garden of the Church and made it fruitful.

Ver. 25. **Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem when they had fulfilled their ministry.** The thread of the history is here taken up again from chap. xi. 30. Barnabas and Saul, after the prediction of Agabus, had been sent from Antioch to Judea with alms for the poor saints of Jerusalem and the churches of Palestine. It seems most probable that they had sojourned during the Passover at Jerusalem, and had been eye-witnesses of the events related in this chapter. They now returned to Antioch, taking with them John Mark, the nephew of Barnabas and the son of that Mary at whose house the solemn assembly was held on the night of Peter's escape. Chrysostom remarks that the writer of the 'Acts' still mentions Barnabas first, for Paul was not yet famous; he had not as yet wrought any sign.

#### EXCURSUS.

##### ON THE DELIVERANCE OF PETER BY THE ANGEL.

Grave indeed had been the danger which had threatened the Church of Christ in the year 44. The Christian community had enjoyed for a considerable period comparative peace and security. This quiet season had been a time of blessed work: the little Church now numbered its thousands; humanly speaking, however, it was yet in its infancy, and if it encountered any great shock, there was still danger that the faith of Jesus might be trampled out, before it had taken permanent root in the hearts and homes of men. Such a shock threatened the little community in the eleventh year of its life. A new state of things had come into existence in Jerusalem and in the Holy Land; instead of a stern, law-loving, but indifferent and scornful Roman governor, a prince of the great Herodian house, through the friendship of the reigning Cæsar, ruled with the title of king over a dominion comprising most of the old territories of the kings of Israel.

As we have already remarked, Herod Agrippa's policy led him in all ways to court the Jewish hierarchy. To please these men and the party in the state which followed their lead, King Herod arrested and scourged (for this is doubtless the meaning of ver. 1 of this chapter) certain nameless but prominent members of the Christian sect; he then, pleased with the popularity his cruel policy won him among that party whose affections he longed to conciliate, arrested and judicially murdered one of the most notorious leaders of the new sect, James the son of Zebedee, one of the famous three whom the great Master had chosen as His closest and dearest friends. This arrest and execution was followed by the imprisonment of Peter, whose death was also resolved upon.



Now Peter was the foremost leader of the Christians. Peter, the martyred James, and perhaps John (who, however, in these first years of Christian history is comparatively little spoken of), were the acknowledged leaders of the sect, as the chosen friends of the Lord; all the congregations seem to have recognised their authority. But James, the fiery and earnest preacher, with a martyr's patient suffering, had passed to his rest, and Peter lay in Herod's prison waiting death. When he was gone, to whom would the Church have looked for earthly guidance in this moment of extreme peril, when king and Sanhedrim had determined to trample out the name and memory of the Crucified?

John in those early days surely was unfit to undertake so grave a charge; he needed those long years of preparation, of study, and of thought which moulded him into the great master of the theology of Christendom. His retiring, contemplative nature would never have fitted him to be the bold, wise leader in those terrible hours when Herod and the Sanhedrim stretched forth their hands to vex the Church.

James,<sup>1</sup> who presided over the Jerusalem Church, was not one of the Twelve; and Stephen, whose great gifts seemed at first to mark him out as a prominent leader, years ago had 'fallen asleep.' It was truly a time of awful peril for the little Church, a peril the congregations were well aware of; so night and day prayer was made without ceasing to God for the safety of their loved and honoured teacher. Had Peter died then, they would indeed have been sheep without a shepherd. And Peter, when the angel left him alone and free in the street of Jerusalem, at once recognised with loving gratitude whence came his great deliverance, the answer to those most earnest prayers: 'Now I know that the Lord hath sent His angel.'

Years after, when the old man Peter *had done his work*, when others had succeeded him in his office of guide and ruler of the Church, a beautiful ecclesiastical legend tells us how again the old man Peter lay in prison at Rome waiting a martyr's death, and how with merely human aid he escaped; then it relates: As he went along the way outside the walls of Rome, he met his Lord

bearing a cross; Peter asked Him, 'Domine, quo vadis?' ('Lord, whither goest Thou?') Jesus answered, 'I go to Rome to be crucified afresh;' and the old man, we read, saw quickly the meaning of the Master's words. *This time* he would serve the cause of Jesus better by remaining in prison, and by bravely dying for His name. This most touching 'memory' of Peter no doubt possesses a groundwork of truth, and, taken together with the account in the 'Acts' of the miraculous escape from Herod's prison, teaches a lesson which many of God's true martyrs have not been slow to learn. How guarded must His servants be before they accept deliverance from any bitter suffering, or freedom from any hard and painful work which may glorify their Master!

Before they accept the deliverance or the freedom, they must be sure it is *an angel's hand* which withdraws from the lips the cup of suffering,—the cup they should remember their Redeemer drank from without shrinking.

The details of this angel's visit are strangely circumstantial. Everything is told us, even Peter's feelings in the matter. At first, when he found himself in the street and free, it seemed to him as though he were dreaming, but as he stood and thought over each circumstance,—how he was awakened by the touch of a bright-shining one; how the radiant visitor spoke to him calmly and without haste, and as it were handed to him his girdle, his sandals, and his cloak; how the chains which linked him to the two sleeping guards were snapped noiselessly asunder; how they passed through the corridors of the prison, through doors and gates which opened silently before them, till he found himself alone in the deep dawn of the cold spring morning in the silent streets of the sleeping city,—then the conviction came upon him that all this was no dream, but that God had indeed sent His angel, and had delivered him from prison and from death.

All rationalistic explanations of the angel's visit are obliged to supply new matter, such as a flash of lightning, a sleeping draught given to the guards, etc., and with all these additions utterly fail to account for the miraculous occurrence. Renan (*Les Apôtres*, cap. xiv.), one of the latest of the writers of this cheerless and unhappy school, frankly tells us that the narrative of the 'Acts' here (*est tellement vis et juste*) 'is so lifelike and so just that it is difficult to find any place in it for legendary elaboration.'

<sup>1</sup> The strong Judaistic tendencies besides of this saintly and ascetic (so called) 'brother of the Lord,' were an effectual bar to his exercising any widespread influence in the rapidly-developing church.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### *The Church's Foreign Missions.*

- 1 NOW there were in the church that was at Antioch<sup>1</sup> certain<sup>2</sup> prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with<sup>3</sup> Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the

<sup>f</sup> See Mat. xxvii. 32.

<sup>g</sup> See Lu. iii. 1.

<sup>h</sup> Ch. xii. 25.

<sup>i</sup> See Lu. i. 23.

<sup>k</sup> See Mat. xvii. 22.

<sup>1</sup> Better rendered, 'Now there were in Antioch, in the church which was there.'

<sup>2</sup> The older authorities omit 'certain.'

<sup>3</sup> was the foster-brother of

<sup>a</sup> See ch. xi. 26.  
<sup>b</sup> See ch. xi. 27.  
<sup>c</sup> 1 Cor. xii. 28,  
29; Eph. iv.  
11; Jas. iii. 1  
(Gk.). So  
Rom. xii. 7.  
<sup>d</sup> Ch. xi. 22-26.  
<sup>e</sup> See ch. iv. 36.  
<sup>f</sup> Rom. xvi. 21.





Holy Ghost<sup>4</sup> said, 'Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the  
 3 work<sup>5</sup> whereunto I have called them. And when they had  
 4 fasted and<sup>6</sup> prayed, and<sup>7</sup> laid *their* hands on them, ' they sent  
 4 them away. So they, being sent forth<sup>8</sup> by the Holy Ghost,<sup>4</sup>  
 departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to<sup>9</sup> Cyprus.  
 5 And when they were at Salamis, they preached<sup>10</sup> the word of  
 God<sup>11</sup> in the synagogues of the Jews: and they had also<sup>12</sup> John  
 6 to<sup>13</sup> *their* minister. And when they had gone through the<sup>14</sup> isle  
 unto<sup>15</sup> Paphos, they found<sup>16</sup> a certain sorcerer,<sup>17</sup> a false prophet,  
 7 a Jew, whose name was Bar-jesus: Which was with the<sup>18</sup> deputy<sup>19</sup>  
 of the country,<sup>20</sup> Sergius Paulus, a prudent man; <sup>21</sup> who  
 called for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to hear the word of  
 8 God. But Elymas the sorcerer<sup>22</sup> (for so is his name by inter-  
 pretation)<sup>23</sup> withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy<sup>24</sup>  
 9 from the faith. Then Saul, (who also is called Paul,) <sup>25</sup> filled  
 10 with the Holy Ghost,<sup>26</sup> set his eyes<sup>27</sup> on him, And said, O full  
 of all subtilty and all<sup>28</sup> mischief, <sup>29</sup> thou child of the devil, *thou*  
 enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to<sup>30</sup> pervert the  
 11 *right* ways of the Lord? And now behold, <sup>31</sup> the hand of the  
 Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun  
 12 for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist and  
 a darkness; and he went about seeking<sup>32</sup> *some* to lead him by  
 12 the hand. Then the deputy,<sup>33</sup> when he saw what was done,  
 believed, being<sup>34</sup> astonished at the doctrine<sup>35</sup> of the Lord.  
 13 Now when<sup>36</sup> Paul and his company loosed<sup>37</sup> from<sup>38</sup> Paphos,  
 they came to<sup>39</sup> Perga in Pamphylia: and<sup>40</sup> John<sup>41</sup> departing  
 14 from them returned<sup>42</sup> to Jerusalem. But when they departed<sup>43</sup>  
 from<sup>44</sup> Perga, they came to<sup>45</sup> Antioch in<sup>46</sup> Pisidia, and went  
 15 into the synagogue<sup>47</sup> on the sabbath day, and sat down. And  
 after the reading of<sup>48</sup> the law and<sup>49</sup> the prophets, <sup>50</sup> the rulers of  
 the synagogue sent unto them, saying, *Ye men and*<sup>51</sup> brethren,  
 if ye have *any*<sup>52</sup> word of<sup>53</sup> exhortation for the people, say *on*.  
 16 Then Paul stood up, and<sup>54</sup> beckoning with *his* hand, said,  
 17 Men of Israel, and<sup>55</sup> ye that fear God, give audience. <sup>56</sup> The  
 God of this people of<sup>57</sup> Israel<sup>58</sup> chose our fathers, and exalted  
 the people<sup>59</sup> when *they* dwelt as strangers<sup>60</sup> in the land of Egypt,  
 18 and<sup>61</sup> with a high arm brought *he* them out of it. And about

ch. xi. 26, etc.).

Ch. xiv. 24.

Ch. ix. 20, xvii. 2, 10, 17, xviii. 4, 19, xix. 8.

So ver. 5; ch. xiv. 1.

Ch. ix. 20, xvii. 2, 10, 17, xviii. 4, 19, xix. 8.

So ver. 5; ch. xiv. 1, xvi. 13.

Ch. xv. 21.

Lu. iv. 17; ver. 27.

See Mk. v. 22.

Heb. xiii. 22.

Heb. xiii. 22; Rom. xii. 8; 1 Cor. xiv. 3; 1 Thes. ii. 3; 1 Tim. iv. 13; Heb. xii. 5.

See Lu. iv. 17; ver. 27.

See ch. xii. 17.

Ver. 26; ch. x. 2, 22, 35.

Cp. vers. 42, 43.

See Lu. xix. 23.

See Lu. xix. 23.

Deut. vii. 6-8.

Ex. i. 1, 7, 12; Ps. cv. 23, 24.

So ch. vii. 17.

Deut. vii. 6-8; Ex. xiii. 14, 16.

<sup>4</sup> or 'the Holy Spirit.'<sup>5</sup> or 'declared.'<sup>6</sup> for their minister<sup>7</sup> The better authorities insert 'whole' before 'isle.' <sup>8</sup> or 'magician or Magian.'<sup>9</sup> the Proconsul<sup>10</sup> omit words in italics, 'of the country.'<sup>11</sup> a man of intelligence<sup>12</sup> better, 'gazed at him intensely.'<sup>13</sup> the teaching<sup>14</sup> or better, 'having set sail from.'<sup>15</sup> or better, 'and they having passed through' <sup>16</sup> omit 'Ye men and.'<sup>17</sup> omit 'of' before 'Israel.'<sup>18</sup> literally, 'in their sojourning.'

the time of 'forty years suffered he their manners<sup>19</sup> in the wilderness. And when 'he had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, 'he divided their land to them by lot.<sup>20</sup> And after that 'he gave unto them judges about the space of 'four hundred and fifty years, until 'Samuel the prophet.<sup>21</sup> And afterward 'they desired a king:<sup>22</sup> and 'God gave unto them Saul the son of Cis, 'a man of the tribe of Benjamin, by the space of forty years. And 'when he had removed him, 'he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, 'I have found David the son of Jesse, 'a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will.<sup>23</sup> 'Of this man's seed hath God according 'to his promise raised<sup>24</sup> unto Israel 'a Saviour, Jesus: When 'John had first preached before his 'coming the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel. And as John 'fulfilled<sup>25</sup> his course, he said, 'Whom think ye that I am? I am not he. But behold, there cometh one after me, whose shoes of his feet<sup>26</sup> I am not worthy to loose. Men and<sup>27</sup> brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and 'whosoever among you feareth<sup>28</sup> God, 'to you is 'the word of this salvation sent. For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and 'their rulers, 'because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets 'which are read every sabbath day, they have 'fulfilled them in condemning him. And 'though they found no cause of death in him, yet desired they Pilate that he should be slain. And when 'they had fulfilled all that was written of him, 'they took him down from 'the tree, and laid him in a sepulchre. But 'God raised him from the dead: And 'he was seen<sup>29</sup> many days of them which 'came up with him 'from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are<sup>30</sup> his 'witnesses unto the people. And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that 'the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again;<sup>31</sup> as it is also written in the second psalm,<sup>31</sup> 'Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.

<sup>19</sup> Mat. xxvii. 22, 23; Mk. xv. 13, 14; Lu. xxiii. 21-23.

<sup>20</sup> Mat. xxvii. 59, 60; Mk. xv. 40; Lu. xxiii. 53; Jo. xix. 38, 41, 42.

<sup>21</sup> 33-34. See ch. ii. 24. <sup>22</sup> See ch. i. 3.

<sup>23</sup> Pa. cxxxii. 11. See Lu. i. 31. Cp. ver. 32; ch. xxvi. 6. So Rom. iv. 13, xv. 8; Gal. iii. 16. See Gen. xii. 3.

<sup>24</sup> Cited from Ps. ii. 7; also in Heb. i. 5, v. 5.

<sup>25</sup> Lu. xviii. 31, xxiv. 44; Jo. xix. 28, 30, 36, 37.

<sup>26</sup> See ch. v. 30.

<sup>27</sup> Mat. xxviii. 6. So ver.

<sup>28</sup> Ch. i. 17, ii. 7.

<sup>29</sup> Ch. x. 41. See Lu. xxiv. 48.

<sup>30</sup> See Jo. iii. 1.

<sup>31</sup> See ch. iii. 17.

<sup>32</sup> See ver. 15.

<sup>33</sup> See Lu. xxiv.

<sup>34</sup> So ch.

<sup>35</sup> xxvi. 22, 23.

<sup>36</sup> Cp. Dan. xi.

<sup>37</sup> 14.

<sup>19</sup> The ancient authorities are nearly equally balanced here, some reading as above, 'suffered he their manners,' others, 'bare them' (or cared for them), (as a man doth bare (or care for) his son).

<sup>20</sup> The ancient authorities read, 'he gave their land as an heritage.'

<sup>21</sup> The text of the ancient authorities here is as follows: 'about the period of four hundred and fifty years; and after this he gave them judges until Samuel the prophet.'

<sup>22</sup> they requested a king

<sup>23</sup> The ancient authorities read here, 'brought to Israel.'

<sup>24</sup> better, 'was in the act of fulfilling.'

<sup>25</sup> better, 'the shoes of whose feet.'

<sup>26</sup> omit 'men and.'

<sup>27</sup> Those among you who

<sup>28</sup> during many days

<sup>29</sup> The older authorities insert 'now' before 'his witnesses.'

<sup>30</sup> omit 'again.'

<sup>31</sup> Many of the Fathers read here, 'in the first Psalm.'

- 34 And as concerning that he <sup>1</sup> raised him up from the dead, *now* <sup>s</sup> Vers. 35, 36,  
no more <sup>1</sup> to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will <sup>t</sup> Cited from  
35 give you <sup>1</sup> the sure mercies of David.<sup>33</sup> Wherefore<sup>33</sup> he saith <sup>1</sup> Isa. lv. 3.  
also in another *psalm*, "Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One <sup>1</sup> Cited from  
36 to see corruption.<sup>34</sup> For David, after he had served his own <sup>1</sup> Ps. xvi. 10.  
generation by <sup>v</sup> the will of God,<sup>35</sup> <sup>w</sup> fell on sleep, and was <sup>x</sup> laid <sup>1</sup> So ch. ii. 27,  
37 unto his fathers, and <sup>1</sup> saw corruption: But he, whom God raised <sup>1</sup> 31.  
38 *again*,<sup>36</sup> saw no corruption. <sup>1</sup> Be it known unto you therefore, <sup>v</sup> See ch. xx. 27.  
men *and*<sup>37</sup> brethren, that <sup>1</sup> through this *man* is preached unto <sup>w</sup> 2 Sam. vii. 12;  
39 you the <sup>a</sup> forgiveness of sins: And <sup>1</sup> by him all that believe are <sup>1</sup> 1 Kings ii. 10.  
<sup>1</sup> justified from all *things*, <sup>d</sup> from which ye could not be justified <sup>1</sup> See Mat.  
40 by the law of Moses. Beware therefore, lest that come upon <sup>1</sup> xxvii. 52.  
41 you, which is spoken of in <sup>e</sup> the prophets: <sup>1</sup> Behold, *ye* despisers, <sup>1</sup> So ch. ii. 29.  
and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a <sup>1</sup> Judg. ii. 10  
work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man<sup>38</sup> declare <sup>1</sup> (Heb. and  
it unto you. <sup>1</sup> Gk.). So  
<sup>1</sup> Gen. xxv. 8,  
etc.  
42 And when the Jews<sup>39</sup> were gone out of the synagogue, <sup>e</sup> the <sup>1</sup> Ch. ii. 14.  
Gentiles<sup>40</sup> besought that these words might be preached to them <sup>1</sup> See Jer.  
43 <sup>1</sup> the next sabbath. Now when the congregation<sup>41</sup> was broken <sup>1</sup> xxxi. 34. So  
up, many of the Jews and <sup>1</sup> religious<sup>42</sup> <sup>1</sup> proselytes followed <sup>1</sup> Lu. xxiv. 47  
Paul and Barnabas: who, speaking to them, <sup>1</sup> persuaded them <sup>1</sup> (Gk.); 1 Jo.  
44 to continue in <sup>m</sup> the grace of God. And the next sabbath day <sup>1</sup> ii. 12.  
came almost the whole city together<sup>43</sup> to hear the word of God. <sup>1</sup> See ch. v. 31.  
45 But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with <sup>1</sup> Isa. liii. 11;  
envy,<sup>44</sup> and spake against those *things* which were spoken by <sup>1</sup> Rom. iii. 28.  
46 Paul, contradicting and<sup>45</sup> <sup>1</sup> blaspheming. Then Paul and Barna- <sup>1</sup> So ch. iv. 12.  
bas <sup>o</sup> waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of <sup>1</sup> Lu. xviii. 14;  
God should <sup>1</sup> first have been spoken to you: but <sup>1</sup> seeing ye put <sup>1</sup> Rom. ii. 13,  
it from *you*,<sup>46</sup> and judge yourselves <sup>1</sup> unworthy of everlasting life, <sup>1</sup> etc.  
47 lo, <sup>1</sup> we turn to the Gentiles. For so hath the Lord commanded <sup>1</sup> See Rom.  
us, *saying*, <sup>1</sup> I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that <sup>1</sup> viii. 3.  
48 thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth. And <sup>1</sup> Mk. i. 2;  
when the Gentiles heard *this*, they were glad, and <sup>1</sup> glorified the <sup>1</sup> Jo. vi. 45.  
word of the Lord: and <sup>v</sup> as many as were ordained to eternal <sup>1</sup> Cp. ch. vii.  
49 life believed. And the word of the Lord was published<sup>47</sup> <sup>1</sup> 42, xv. 15.  
<sup>1</sup> Cited from  
Hab. i. 5.  
Cp. Isa.  
xxix. 14.  
Cp. ver. 16.  
Cp. ver. 44  
(Gk.).  
Ver. 50;  
ch. xvii. 4, 17  
in the Gk.  
So ch. xvi.  
14, xviii. 7.  
See Mat.  
xxiii. 15.  
So ch. xi. 23,  
xiv. 22. See  
ch. xviii. 4.  
Ch. xi. 23.  
xiv. 26, xv.  
40: Rom. v.  
15; Eph. iii.  
2, 7; Col. i. 6;  
Tit. ii. 11;  
Heb. xii. 15;  
1 Pet. v. 12;  
Jude 4.  
Ch. xviii. 6;  
1 Tim. i. 20;  
1 Pet. iv. 4  
(Gk.); 2 Pet.  
ii. 12 (Gk.).  
So Jas. ii. 7;  
Jude 10.

<sup>o</sup> See ch. iv. 29. Cp. Rom. x. 20. <sup>1</sup> See ch. iii. 26. So ver. 26. <sup>g</sup> See Deut. xxxii. 21. So Mat. xxi. 43.  
<sup>r</sup> See Mat. xxii. 8. <sup>s</sup> See ch. xxviii. 28. <sup>t</sup> Cited from Isa. xlix. 6. So Lu. ii. 32. See Isa. xlii. 6.  
<sup>u</sup> Cp. 2 Thess. i. 12. <sup>v</sup> Cp. Jo. i. 12; Rom. ix. 23.

<sup>33</sup> I will give you the holy and sure mercies of David <sup>35</sup> for this cause  
<sup>34</sup> *more literally*, 'Thou wilt not give up the Holy One to see corruption.'  
<sup>36</sup> for David, after having in his own generation served the counsel of God  
<sup>38</sup> raised up [from the dead]; *omit* 'again.' <sup>37</sup> *omit* 'men and.'  
<sup>38</sup> though one should declare it to you  
<sup>39</sup> and as they were going out of the synagogue, *the older authorities omitting*  
*'the Jews.'*  
<sup>40</sup> they besought, *older authorities omitting* 'Gentiles.'  
<sup>41</sup> the synagogue <sup>42</sup> devout <sup>43</sup> *more literally*, 'was collected together.'  
<sup>44</sup> *better rendered*, 'eager rivalry.'  
<sup>45</sup> *The older authorities omit the words* 'contradicting and.'  
<sup>46</sup> *better rendered*, 'ye push it from you.' <sup>47</sup> was published abroad

50 throughout all the region. But <sup>w</sup> the Jews stirred up the <sup>x</sup> devout  
and <sup>y</sup> honourable women, and <sup>z</sup> the chief *men* of the city, and  
<sup>a</sup> raised <sup>48</sup> persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled  
51 them out of their coasts.<sup>49</sup> But they <sup>b</sup> shook off the dust of <sup>c</sup> See Mk. vi.  
52 their feet <sup>b</sup> against them, and came unto <sup>c</sup> Iconium. And the <sup>d</sup> Ch. xiv. 2  
disciples were filled with <sup>d</sup> joy, and with <sup>e</sup> the Holy Ghost.<sup>50</sup> <sup>(Gk.)</sup> So  
<sup>2 Tim. iii. 12.</sup>

<sup>b</sup> Lu. ix. 5. So Mat. x. 14; Mk. vi. 11; Lu. x. 11. Cp. ch. xviii. 6.  
<sup>d</sup> 1 Thea. i. 6. So Mat. v. 12; ch. v. 41. See Jo. xvi. 22.

<sup>c</sup> See ch. xiv. 1  
<sup>e</sup> See ch. ii. 4.

<sup>48</sup> a persecution

<sup>49</sup> the confines

<sup>50</sup> or 'Holy Spirit.'

Ver. 1. **The church that was at Antioch.** It was a grand work the church of Antioch was about to inaugurate, but a work which to the fathers of the Church who dwelt under the shadow of the proud Jerusalem Temple would seem very strange and contrary to the spirit which had so long dwelt in the Hebrew peoples, and which bound and fettered the first Christian fathers. Conscious of this feeling of non-approval with which so many Jewish Christians would view the Gentile mission work of Antioch, the writer of the 'Acts' is very careful to record how blessed was this innovating church of Antioch, how strong in inspired men. The eleventh chapter, vers. 27, 28, recounts how Agabus and certain prophets from Jerusalem came to Antioch; but in this solemn introduction to the story of the Gentile missions, special mention is made of the Divine powers and gifts which belonged exclusively to the Syrian church, and the very names of the more distinguished of these inspired men are given.

**Certain prophets and teachers.** The Church of the first days during the lifetime of the apostles possessed certain supernatural gifts; we find in the 'Acts' and 'Epistles' many references to these powers. In a well-known passage (1 Cor. xii. 8-11), St. Paul speaks of these gifts at some length; they certainly existed in the early years which succeeded the first Pentecost. The exercise of these powers by a few gifted persons is mentioned in the writings of the apostles as a matter of ordinary occurrence. But when the apostles and the first generation of believers had passed away, and the foundations of the Church of Jesus had been surely laid, these powers, given for a certain time and a special purpose, seem to have ceased. In writings later than the books of the New Testament, the mention of such supernatural gifts is very rare. The power bestowed on men for a certain season to assist in working out a great work, may—after the death of the last of the apostles—have lingered a brief while in the person of some old and honoured brother, once the companion or pupil of John, or even of Paul; and an exercise of the old gift of 'prophecy' or of 'healing' by one of these grey and time-worn soldiers of the cause, who in their youth sat at the apostles' feet, and from them received some portion of the blessed influence of the Spirit, is probably alluded to in those rare passages in early Christian writings when mention is made of the fading splendour of these Divine powers.

The 'prophets' and 'teachers' here spoken of were men to whom the power was at times given of communicating truths connected with the religion of Jesus under a Divine inspiration, and occasionally of predicting future events. The 'prophets,' who seem to have been the more gifted order,

were all teachers; but the teacher was not necessarily a prophet. We can hardly estimate now the extraordinary influence which the burning words and the wise instructions of these divinely-inspired men must have had in those first days on the congregations of Christians.

**Barnabas.** This eminent man is mentioned first in the list as being the most prominent person among the Antioch Christians. One of the first members of the little band of believers who were gathered at Jerusalem, he was distinguished in the earliest days of the faith by his generous gift to the brethren (Acts iv. 36, 37). After the death of Stephen, many of the believers were scattered abroad; some of them chose Antioch as their home (Acts xi. 19, 20). Among these exiles Barnabas occupied a leading position. The work in the great Syriac capital appears to have been singularly successful, and soon a large and increasing brotherhood was established there.

In all generous and devoted work, Barnabas was ever prominent. He it was who induced the older apostles first to look kindly on the Pharisee Saul after his conversion; he it was who, again recognising the splendid powers, and reading well the great heart of Saul, went subsequently to Tarsus, and having sought out, induced the future apostle to come to Antioch to help him in his work there; and later it was Barnabas in company with this same Saul who carried to the impoverished congregations of Jerusalem the offerings of the kindly Antioch church.

No one in the early Church exercised a more noble influence than the Cypriote Barnabas; no one laboured more earnestly or more successfully to carry out his Risen Master's plans. As a Levite and one of the old Jerusalem brotherhood, he was especially fitted to act as mediator between the two representative churches of early Christianity,—the one which looked backward only, and, fondly holding fast to a noble but worn-out tradition, was reluctant to enlarge its borders; the other, which looked only forwards, and forgetting the things which were behind, kept its eye fixed on the vast Gentile lands, whose fields were white already for harvest, but across which no reaper as yet had ever passed. If Christian history has scarcely done justice to this great memory, it is because the name of Barnabas was overshadowed by one far greater. His work and name are both alike well-nigh forgotten in the greater glory which surrounds the name and work of Paul.

**Simeon called Niger.** Nothing is known of this Simeon. Some have conjectured he was identical with that Simon the Cyrenian who carried the cross of Christ on the crucifixion morning.

**Lucius of Cyrene.** It is possible that this was



the Lucius mentioned by St. Paul as his kinsman (Rom. xvi. 21).

**Manaen.** We are told here that Manaen was brought up with Herod Antipas the tetrarch, who was at this time an exile at Lyons. The Greek word translated 'brought up with,' might signify either 'foster-brother' or 'comrade.' It was very much the practice for persons of high rank to associate other children with their own in their studies and pastimes. This Manaen was no doubt a person of considerable position and rank at Antioch. Ewald remarks that it is evident that men and women of the higher orders joined the ranks of Christians in Palestine in very early days, as we see from the example of this Manaen and also of Joanna (Luke viii. 3).

**Saul.** Mentioned last, because no doubt up to this time he occupied a position lower in the Church than the other prophets and teachers mentioned here.

**Ver. 2. As they ministered to the Lord, and**

**fasted.** That is, while the solemn service of the Church was going on, came the word of the Lord to one, doubtless, of the prophets then present. The word translated 'as they ministered' was the general word used in the Old Testament for 'priestly service.' The writer of the 'Acts' here uses it to express generally the Christian divine service, including prayer, the singing of hymns and psalms, the office of preaching, the whole crowned by the solemn partaking of the Lord's Supper. It is not certain if this was the ordinary service of the Antioch church which the Christians were in the habit of attending the first day of the week, or if it was a special solemn gathering, called together in consequence of some intimation of the Holy Ghost to one of the inspired prophets, that a voice would come from God to the congregation. The latter is probably the case, as we read 'they fasted,' no doubt in preparation for the hour when they looked for the revelation.

**The Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas**



Port of Seleucia.

**and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.** Chrysostom writes on these words: 'Here we may see a proof of the divinity of the Holy Ghost. The prophets were ministering to the Lord. He does not say, Separate Barnabas and Saul to the Lord, but to *Me* for the ministry to which I have called them, showing that He is co-equal with God.'

**Ver. 3. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them.** This their final consecration took place on another occasion. Ewald suggests it was performed at one of the usual public assemblies held always on the first day of the week.

This simple ceremony of ordination was well known in the story of Israel; the disciples of Antioch, after fasting and prayer, laid their hands on the heads of the chosen two, and sent them forth to the work to which the Holy Ghost had called them.

This act at Antioch in the year 45 was the solemn ordination of Paul and Barnabas to the apostleship. *Before* this public ceremony, we find them placed among the 'prophets' and 'teachers' of the Church; *after*, they were known as apostles (Acts xiv. 4 and 14). They ranked then with the original Twelve who had been chosen by Christ; so Paul writes to the Corinthian church 'how he was not behind the very chiefest of the apostles.' Barnabas for years had held a prominent position in the church of Jerusalem; he was the most distinguished of the Antioch prophets and teachers; and Paul, who had been called by the Lord Himself, had seen visions and had received revelations. These two were specially designated to the Antioch Christians by the Holy Spirit, to be set apart for a peculiar work; and the Antioch church, following out the Divine command, publicly ordained them to the apostleship by the solemn and ancient ceremony of laying on of hands.



**Ver. 4. Departed.** It was the first attempt of the two missionary apostles, and no doubt it was an anxious question with them *whither* they should first bend their steps, into which of the isles of the Gentiles they should first bear the message of the Redeemer. Cyprus was chosen, for it was the fatherland of Barnabas, who looked for at least a kindly reception and a welcome among his connections and family; at all events, they would not be quite friendless, these two solitary men, at the first stage of their dangerous mission journey.

**Unto Seleucia.** This was the port of Antioch, some fifteen miles from the city; it was built and strongly fortified by Seleucus Nicator about 345 years before this time. This sovereign is said to have built sixteen Antiochs and nine Seleucias. This city and harbour, to distinguish it, was called 'Seleucia on the sea.' It was from this port of the luxurious and wicked Antioch that used to sail year by year, to Rome and Italy, that swarm of miserable and degraded beings Juvenal tells us of, when he writes of the corruption of Rome, and

how much of it was due to Syria and its fatal influences (*Sat.* iii. 62).

**From thence they sailed to Cyprus.** The beautiful island was only a few hours' sail from Seleucia, being distant about forty-eight miles from the Syrian coast. Cyprus is 130 miles long, and in one part of the island 50 miles in breadth. It was famous for its corn and oil and fruits. Its history has been a chequered one. Successively Persia, Egypt, and Rome have been its masters; the wave of Saracen conquest reached it in the ninth century; the Crusaders restored it to Christendom in the thirteenth century, and it subsequently became part of the territories of Venice. The Ottoman Turks conquered it in the sixteenth century, since which period it has formed part of their dominions. At the time of the journey of Paul and Barnabas, Jews, it is said, constituted one-half of the population; this was no doubt one of the reasons which weighed with the missionary apostles when they chose it as the first scene of their labours (see also notes on xi. 19, 20).

**Ver. 5. At Salamis.** At this time Salamis was



Site of Old Paphos.

the chief mercantile city of the island; very many of the inhabitants here were Jews. In the reign of the Emperor Trajan it was desolated in a terrible revolt of the Cyprian Jews; the revolt ended in the expulsion of the Jews from the island.

**They had also John to their minister.** Among other duties which fell to the lot of John Mark, the nephew of Barnabas, was of course included the important office of baptizing most if not all the converts. This rite was seldom administered by an apostle, as we see from I Cor. i. 14; see, too, Acts x. 48.

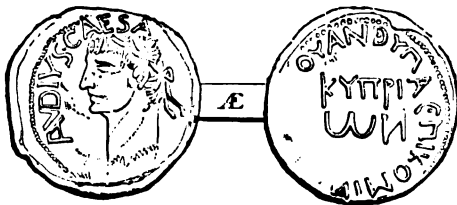
**Ver. 6. Unto Paphos.** Salamis was at the eastern extremity of Cyprus, Paphos at the western. The apostles had thus passed through the whole length of the island. New Paphos was then the capital and the residence of the governor; it was only a few miles distant from Old Paphos, where the famous temple of Venus stood.

**They found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew.** On the presence of this Jew, who professed to be a magician, with the Roman governor of Cyprus, Howson (*St. Paul*, chap. v.) writes: 'All

the Greek and Latin literature of the empire, from Horace to Lucian, abounds in proofs of the prevalent credulity of this sceptical period. . . . The faith of educated Romans was utterly gone. We can hardly wonder when the East was thrown open—the land of mystery, the cradle of the earliest religions—that the imagination both of the populace and the aristocracy of Rome became fanatically excited, and that they greedily welcomed the most absurd and degrading superstitions. Not only was the metropolis of the empire crowded with hungry Greeks, but Syrian fortune-tellers flocked into all the haunts of public amusement. Athens and Corinth did not now contribute the greatest or the worst part of the dregs of Rome, but, to adopt Juvenal's words, "The (Syrian) Orontes itself flowed into the Tiber." . . . Every part of the East contributed its share to the general superstition. . . . The more remote districts of Asia Minor sent her music and her medicines, Chaldeas her Babylonian numbers and her mathematical calculations. To these . . . we must add one more Asiatic nation, the nation of the

Israelites. . . . The Jewish beggar-woman was the gipsy of the first century, shivering and crowding in the outskirts of the city, and telling fortunes, as Ezekiel of old said, "for handfuls of barley and pieces of bread." . . . Not only were the women of Rome drawn aside into this varied fanaticism, but the eminent men of the declining republic and the absolute sovereigns of the early empire were tainted and enslaved by the same superstitions. The great Marius had in his camp a Syrian, probably a Jewish prophetess, by whose divinations he regulated the progress of his campaigns. . . . Pompey, Crassus, and Cæsar, at the close of the republic, when their oracles were silent, sought information from Oriental astrology. No picture in the great Latin satirist (Juvenal) is more powerfully drawn than that in which he shows us the Emperor Tiberius sitting on the rock of Capri with his flock of Chaldeans round him.'

Ver. 7. **The deputy of the country.** The word rendered 'deputy' is the Greek term for the Latin 'proconsul.' In the Roman empire there were two classes of provincial governments. The one class was under the direction of the senate and people. In these senatorial provinces the presence of an armed force was not supposed to be needed to ensure a peaceful administration. The rulers of these peaceful provinces were termed proconsuls; they carried with them into their govern-



Coin of Proconsul of Cyprus.

ments the ensigns of a consul, the lictors and the fasces. These held office at first only for a year, but this restriction was after a time relaxed, and these governors remained five years, or longer, in office. Such a province was Cyprus.

The other class of provinces—less peaceful, as it was supposed, needing the presence of a military force to preserve order—were governed by a military officer styled a 'proprætor' or 'legatus,' appointed by and removed at the pleasure of the emperor. Syria was a province of this description. The sub-districts of these 'imperial' provinces were under the charge of procurators. Judea, at the time of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, was under the charge of one of these, the procurator Pontius Pilate, whose commanding officer was the legatus of Syria.

**Sergius Paulus.** Nothing certain is known of this Roman official. Renan (*St. Paul*, chap. i.) suggests that he may fairly be identified with the naturalist of this name mentioned by Pliny.

**A prudent man**—better rendered a 'man of understanding.' The proconsul was one of those many high-class Romans of that period, who, finding no satisfaction in the strange, fantastic system of idolatry at Rome and the East, sought for a nobler faith. It was this restless, uneasy spirit which led Sergius Paulus, while seeking truth, to make a friend of the wandering Magian Elymas, who professed to be a Jew—one of that

strange nation which claimed for ages the title of the exclusive servants of the one true God.

Ver. 8. **But Elymas the sorcerer** (for so is his name by interpretation). Elymas is an Arabic word which means the 'wise,' the 'Magian,' or 'magician.' It was evidently self-interest which induced the vagrant Jew to depreciate the stranger missionaries in the eyes of the proconsul. They, he saw, were in earnest; and he feared with reason, if his patron listened to them, his chances of further gain in Cyprus were gone.

Ver. 9. **Then Saul (who also is called Paul).** This abrupt statement of the writer of the 'Acts' is the only explanation given of a change in the great apostle's name. *Before* the visit to the coast of the governor of Cyprus he is always called Saul; *after* the visit to Cyprus he is ever spoken of as Paul. By this name in all his epistles he speaks of himself; by this name James and the Jerusalem Council write of him in their letters to the Gentile churches (Acts xv. 25); by this name Peter years after speaks of him, calling him 'his beloved brother Paul' (2 Pet. iii. 15). The question arises, Whence came this second name? Two distinct classes of explanation have been suggested: (a) He received the name of Paul at this time in Cyprus, and in some way or other the name is connected with his friend and convert, the Roman Sergius Paulus. Either the grateful proconsul, finding the Christian missionaries, from whom he had learned the way of salvation, would receive no recompense or reward, persuaded the more prominent of the two to exchange his Jewish for his own illustrious Gentile appellation, as a memorial of what he had received from them, or his friends gave him the name in memory of the work done in Cyprus. (b) Saul possessed the Gentile name of Paul even before he was a Christian. This adoption of a Gentile name in addition to the original Hebrew name was a practice well known among the Jews. Thus we find Belteshazzar—Daniel; Esther—Hadassah; Simon—Peter, in the present chapter Simeon—Niger; John—Mark; so in the case of the Jew of Tarsus, Saul—Paulus: 'Saul, who also is called Paul.' Paul, it must be remembered, was a Hellenistic Jew and also a Roman citizen, and as such very probably, indeed, possessed two names—the one Hebrew, the other Latin. On the whole, the second explanation seems the more probable account of the two names of the Gentile apostle. From this time onward the Roman name 'Paul' is only made use of. Hitherto the life of the Pharisee of Tarsus had been spent almost exclusively among Jews; from henceforth his life and work lay among the Gentile subjects of Rome, who would know and speak of the great apostle only as 'Paul of Tarsus.'

**Filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him.** From the narrative it is clear that the Jewish teachers—the true and the false—met together in the presence of the Roman governor, who, in the end, was convinced by the arguments and power of Paul. The disputes turned, no doubt, on the meaning of the words of the old prophets of Israel respecting the coming of Messiah, His kingdom here, and His future sitting in judgment. The clever Magian evidently gave a false meaning to the words and prophecies, perhaps asserting that the resurrection of the dead was past already, as did the false teacher alluded to in 2 Tim. ii. 18 (see also

Col. ii. 8); for Paul, in ver. 10, recognises in his burning reproaches Elymas' power and ability—'O full of subtilty and all mischief'—and charges him with endeavouring, by his false though fair-seeming teaching, to prevent the noble Sergius Paulus from walking in the ways in which man should walk before God. As is so often the case in false teaching, the restraints to evil living, the checks to a selfish, luxurious, indulgent life, which a belief in the Messiah of Paul always imposes, were removed by the loose, imperfect doctrine of the Jewish Magian.

Ver. 11. *Thou shalt be blind.* Miracles of punishment are very rare in the New Testament. Peter and Paul each once at least worked a miracle of wrath in the name of their Master,—Peter, in the case of Ananias and his guilty wife in the presence of a great Jewish assembly; Paul, before the Roman governor of Cyprus. In both these instances of a terrible severity, it was not simple unbelief which was punished, but a course of conduct which, in the one case, set the example of religious hypocrisy, and in the other gave its sanction to a self-indulgent, evil life. Elymas was punished for a deliberate using of talents and power to persuade men to be enemies of righteousness, and haters of the pure life loved by the Lord.

*Not seeing the sun for a season.* Even here the punishment might be only of temporary duration, the gracious purpose being to awaken repentance in him, as well to show the Roman that the doctrine of the Lord preached by Paul and Barnabas was with authority. Gloag's remarks here on the miracle-power of the apostles are good: 'We are not, however, to suppose that the apostles possessed the power of working miracles at pleasure, but only when they felt a Divine impulse urging them to perform one. Paul struck Elymas with blindness because he felt inspired to perform that miracle; but he could not cure Epaphroditus of his sickness, or remove from himself the thorn in the flesh. The miraculous power with which he was invested was not under his own control, but under the control and direction of Him who bestowed that power.'

Ver. 12. *Believed.* That Sergius Paulus was baptized is the natural inference. 'Believed' is the ordinary expression used in the early Christian records for turning to the Lord and joining the Church (so Acts iv. 4, xi. 21, xix. 18). The proconsul of Cyprus is another instance of men of high rank joining the Christian brotherhood in very early times (see note on ver. 1 of this chapter).

Ver. 13. *Paul and his company.* Paul now was evidently the leading person of the mission; he and Barnabas had exchanged places; the disputation before Sergius Paulus, and the miracle of punishment worked on the Magian, placed Paul in a new position. The ungrudging spirit of Barnabas seems at once to have conceded the first place to his more gifted fellow-worker.

*Perga in Pamphylia.* Perga was a large and flourishing city, almost as famous for the worship of the goddess Diana as was Ephesus. For some reasons not known to us, the apostles stayed but a very short time in Perga; on their return, we read in Acts xiv. 25 how they preached the word there.

The flourishing inland cities of Asia Minor, such as Antioch and Iconium, were the home of many Jews; these, at a distance from Jerusalem and its stern exclusive spirit, appear to have drawn into their synagogues many proselytes and

hearers. Mixed marriages between these Jews and the Gentile natives of the country appear not to have been uncommon (see Acts xvi. 1-3). Paul, whose home was in the not distant Cilician Tarsus, and who had recently spent two or more years there, was of course acquainted with these mixed Jewish and Gentile congregations, and considered that among them the preaching of Jesus as Messiah would receive a welcome.

*And John, departing from them, returned to Jerusalem.* It is not told us why the nephew of Barnabas abandoned the work here. Some suggest as a reason for his desertion, his dislike to Paul's evident intention to found a great Gentile Church; his Jerusalem training and associations preventing him from sympathising with a policy which would place the Gentile on an equality with the Jew in the kingdom of God. But the more probable reason for his desertion was, that he shrank from the dangers and hardships of the mission. See for a detailed account of the life and work of this John Mark, note on chap. xv. 39.

Ver. 14. *They came to Antioch in Pisidia.* Antioch in Pisidia was one of the many Antiochs (see note on ver. 4) built by Seleucus Nicator, about 350 years before the visit of Paul and Barnabas. It was a city of considerable importance, and a Roman colony (on the meaning of 'colony,' see note on chap. xvi. 12). Vast ruins of the once celebrated Pisidian capital were identified some forty years ago by an English traveller.

Ver. 16. *Men of Israel, and ye that fear God.* 'Men of Israel,'—that is, the Jews and proselytes worshipping in the congregation. 'Those that fear God' included those Gentile natives of Pisidia and strangers who had given up idol-worship, and who worshipped the God of Israel, without, however, being circumcised. They are usually termed 'proselytes of the gate.'

*Paul's Sermon in the Synagogue of Antioch in Pisidia, 17-41.*

This discourse falls naturally into three divisions:

- (a) 17-22. A sketch of the grand old story of the chosen people till the days of David.
- (b) 23-37. Paul speaks of David's great descendant foreseen by the prophets, and points out how all prophecy was fulfilled in the crucified descendant of David, Jesus. He tells them, this crucified but now risen Jesus is their promised Messiah.
- (c) 38-41. Every one, Gentile as well as Jew, who receives this Jesus as Messiah, may find in Him forgiveness of all sins.

*A Rough Paraphrase of Paul's Antioch Sermon, from the Abstract or Condensed Report given by the Compiler of the Acts of the Apostles.*

The preacher began with a short sketch of the story of the chosen people, lightly touching on some of its grander and nobler chapters. For instance, he told them how, when Israel was a stranger in Egypt, God, as a father towards a child, watched over their fortunes, training them to a higher life, and raising them in the estimation of the peoples of the world. He told them how they came out from Egypt, borne up by the glorious arm of the Lord. He reminded them of

the conquest of Canaan, and spoke of the establishment of the monarchy of Saul, and closed the sketch of the older story of Israel with a reference to David, the man after God's own heart; and from David he passed at once to David's great Descendant, whom John the Baptist, the well-known and generally-acknowledged prophet, saluted as Messiah.

'This Son of David was to be the Great Deliverer,'—this was the subject of the second division of his sermon in the Antioch synagogue. Surely Israel, argued Paul, ought to have received Him, for His Divine mission was attested—1st, by His resurrection from the dead; 2d, by the strange fulfilment in His person of all that was written in the prophets concerning the sufferings of Messiah. Then he told the Antioch Jews and Gentile proselytes that to them were the glad tidings sent, for the Jerusalem Jews in their stubborn self-will had rejected Him; and this sin of theirs was not lessened because *through them* all that the old prophets wrote of Messiah had been fulfilled. They should have kept their eyes fixed on the high and lofty things prophesied of Him; and knowing well what was foretold concerning Messiah's sufferings, should surely have prevented their rulers from being the chief actors in His humiliation and death.

What a strange, inconceivable folly, to fall into the very sin foretold in the sacred records they were ever listening to! But when these blind ones—leaders of Israel—had worked on Him (Christ) all the fearful things predicted in the Old Testament, and left Him in the grave, then God, on His side, began to work *His* work, and raised the crucified Messiah from the dead. God's vast work, begun in the resurrection of Jesus, Paul the missionary told them he was helping to carry on, by speaking thus before the present audience in the synagogue at Antioch, by pointing out to them that the well-known promises to the fathers that a Redeemer for time and eternity should arise was now fulfilled to them, the children, in the person of the risen Jesus.

Alone through this Messiah Jesus, said the preacher Paul, can come remission of sins; alone through faith in Him can men be justified from every sin, a justification they sought in vain in the law of Moses.

Men, then, must beware lest, in rejecting this Messiah, the doom of death foretold in the prophets come upon them.

We possess in this report of the speech either the memoranda of one present (probably St. Luke), and who doubtless wrote these memoranda down at the time, or else it is a copy of the very notes of Paul himself.

Although a full abstract of the great sermon, it is only an abstract, but it evidently preserves many of the very words used by Paul. The last portion unfolds the doctrines known in Christian theology especially as Pauline, and in fact summarises the earlier chapters of his famous Epistle to the Romans, where his view of 'justification by faith only' is laid open in all its breadth and fulness.

The sermon, in its historical introduction, follows that school of early Jewish Christian teaching of which St. Stephen's apology is the great example. Saul of Tarsus, the Pharisee, must have heard those winning, eloquent words in the Sanhedrim hall, must have felt their power,

and recognised how unanswerable, from a Jewish standpoint, was the argument. The grand old story of Israel was as welcome a theme to the Jew of Pisidian Antioch as it was to the Hebrew of the Hebrews who had never wandered beyond the shadow of the Lord's house at Jerusalem; and the early Christian preacher seems to have won the attention of many an Israelitic congregation by thus appealing to the undying spirit of Jewish nationality.

In the *central* part of the discourse, Paul, like Peter in his first recorded sermon in the early chapters of the 'Acts,' makes the resurrection the great proof of the Messiahship of Jesus, and with Peter cites the same verse of a well-known Psalm. This making the resurrection the central point of early Christian preaching was no doubt the universal practice of the Jerusalem apostles, who could appeal to so many eye-witnesses of the strange, mighty fact; and Barnabas had no doubt, during their long friendship, instructed Paul in the method of teaching adopted by the apostles of the Lord.

The *third* division of the discourse may be said to have been exclusively Pauline in character. To speak of the 'impossibility of being justified by the law of Moses' was hardly a development of Christian belief. Jesus had already proclaimed that the reign of the law of Moses was over for ever, but still this open declaration that justification could alone be found by faith in Jesus,—a great truth which the preacher afterwards fully elaborated in the Epistle to the Romans, and that the Gentile equally with the Jew might attain to this great salvation,—marked a new point of departure in Christian theology.

#### *First Division of the Sermon—Sketch of the Story of Israel till the Days of David.*

Ver. 17. The God of this people of Israel chose our fathers. The Eternal chose Israel out of the various peoples of the world for 'His own,' to keep burning, in the midst of the varied populations given up to idolatry, and exposed to the terrible consequences which followed impure idol-worship, the light of the knowledge of the one true, pure God. The special work of Israel was not what is usually termed human learning, nor were the schools of Jerusalem and the Holy Land at any period resorted to by foreigners, and yet the Hebrew nation ranks with the Greeks as educators of the human race. It has been well and truly said, if we take away two nations from the history of the world, the people of the earth might still have sat in darkness and in the shadow of death, though in their most flourishing periods they have scarcely counted one-hundredth part of the human race; and this influence, which they alone shared with the people of antiquity most famous for letters, was only a small part of the work worked in the world by the people whom God chose for 'His own.'

**Exalted the people.** Not only by increasing their numbers, but exalting them in the eyes of the nations by the mighty works wrought by Moses previous to the exodus.

**With an high arm.** The expression 'high arm' is the same used in Ex. vi. 6 (LXX.), rendered in the English Version 'with stretched-out arm.' The figure was probably originally suggested to Moses and the children of Israel by the familiar hieroglyphic which represents 'Might' by two outstretched arms.

Ver. 18. **Suffered he their manners.** Another word is found in the most ancient Greek MSS., which signifies, 'He (God) bare them (in the wilderness) as a nursing father,' as in Deut. i. 31.

Ver. 19. **Seven nations in the land of Chanaan.** Compare Deut. vii. 1. 'These 'seven' were the principal and most powerful tribes of Canaan.

Ver. 20. **And after that he gave unto them judges about the space of four hundred and fifty years.** According to the received text, it would seem that the period during which the judges ruled in Israel was four hundred and fifty years; and this seems to agree with the chronology of the Book of Judges and the date given by Josephus, but it varies from the statement given in 1 Kings vi. 1. These questions of obscure dates, especially in a period so confused as the times of the judges, are of little or no importance. In the present instance, however, the apparent discrepancy is done away with by the discovery of what is evidently the true reading. In the majority of the oldest Greek MSS., the words, 'about the space of four hundred and fifty years,' *precede* the words, 'and after that he gave them judges.' The passage, then, runs thus: 'He divided their land to them by lot' (or better rendered, 'He gave them their land for a possession') 'for about four hundred and fifty years, and after that he gave them judges until Samuel.' The only remaining question is, when did the four hundred and fifty years commence? The birth of Isaac, on the whole, seems to be the period when God chose their fathers for the possession of the land.

Ver. 21. **By the space of forty years.** The Old Testament does not mention the length of Saul's reign. The statement here, however, agrees with Josephus, who speaks of Saul reigning eighteen years before Samuel's death and twenty-two after it.

Ver. 22. **And when he had removed him.** That is, by death. It was not until Saul had perished that David became king, although he had been anointed during the lifetime of Saul.

**David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart.** This expression is not found in this form in the Old Testament, but is made up of two passages from Ps. lxxxix. 20, where the Eternal, speaking, says, 'I have found David my servant,' and 1 Sam. xiii. 14, where Samuel speaking to Saul says, 'The Lord hath sought Him a man after His own heart.'

In our estimate of the character of this king 'after God's own heart,' we must ever remember his nobility of aim and purpose, his unwearied labour for the welfare of the peoples committed to his charge, his devotion to God, his longing after a purer and better life, his bitter remorse whenever he fell; and at the same time, without attempting to extenuate the dark and terrible sins which marred his splendid reign, we must remember the wild and half-savage state of society in the midst of which David lived, and the terrible temptation to which an absolute and irresponsible ruler of such a society was then exposed. One characteristic especially distinguished David's rule—he rigidly guarded the people from idolatry and all the abominations which attended idol-worship, and kept them faithful to the adoration of the pure and holy God of their fathers.

*Second Division of the Sermon.—Of the Promised Messiah, Jesus, the Son of David, 23–37.*

Ver. 23. **Of this man's seed.** This was the first

requisite, for unless He were descended from David, Jesus could not be the Messiah foretold by the prophets.

**God, according to his promise, raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus.** The first part of the Antioch sermon spoke of the history of Israel under the protection and guidance of the unseen Messiah; the second part of the discourse tells of this Messiah's appearance on earth.

'According to His promise.' Paul returns to and speaks of the long looked-for promise in the thirty-second verse. Instead of the word translated 'raised' (unto Israel), the word contained in the older MSS. here signifies 'brought' (unto Israel). It is the very word used in the Messianic prophecy of Zechariah iii. 8: 'Behold, I will bring forth my servant the Branch.'

Ver. 24. **When John had first preached before his coming.** The literal translation of the Greek gives a clearer meaning: 'John having preached before His coming.' Paul mentions this preaching and testimony of the Baptist to Jesus as a thing well known. A vast number of the Jews seem to have acknowledged John's authority as a prophet. His mission created a great stir in the Holy Land; and later we read of his disciples at Ephesus, some twenty-five years after the death of the Baptist (Acts xix. 3).

Ver. 25. **And as John fulfilled his course.** Better rendered, 'And as John was fulfilling his course.' This was an expression peculiar to Paul; see 2 Tim. iv. 7: 'I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course.' Compare also Paul's words in Acts xx. 24, Gal. ii. 2. The words signify, 'When the work and ministry of John the Baptist was near its close.' It was just before that imprisonment which was terminated in the cruel death inflicted by Herod, that John said, not once, but, as Alford remarks, habitually—

**Whom think ye that I am?** The reading of three of the oldest MSS. would require, instead of 'Whom think ye?' 'What think ye that I am?' This slight change, if made, would in no wise alter the sense, but would impress more forcibly John's fear of being mistaken for that glorious One whose way he was preparing.

**There cometh one after me.** The very words and thoughts used by Luke (and Paul) in the Third Gospel in the account of the mission of the Baptist. Respecting the expression itself ('whose shoes,' etc.), it was looked upon as the office of the lowest slaves to unfasten their master's sandals.

Ver. 26. **Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you feareth God, to you is the word of this salvation sent.** Before speaking at length of the Crucified as Messiah, Paul excites the attention of the congregation by pointing out that to *them* who were then listening to his words was this salvation offered. In the word 'brethren,' he appeals lovingly to them as belonging to one race with himself; while, in the expression, 'children of the stock of Abraham,' he again reminds them of the glorious hopes of Israel. The Gentile listeners who were present, under the term, 'whosoever among you feareth God,' he associates with all true Jews. 'To you all in this distant Pisidian Antioch, comes now the word of the Lord.'

Ver. 27. **For they that dwell at Jerusalem.** For, Paul went on to say, in that proud home of our common faith, in the holy city, our rulers and priests have rejected Him. They have ignored

those voices of the prophets which are ever ringing in their ears; therefore to you now, Jews of the dispersion and Gentiles who fear God, the apostles of the Lord are sent with the glad tidings of salvation. In other words, we find the same truth expressed in ver. 46, 'Lo, we turn to the Gentiles;' and years after, again in the imperial city, we hear Paul telling the Jews of Rome that the salvation of God is sent to the Gentiles, and that they will hear it (Acts xxviii. 28). The righteous judgment of God in all its awful severity was shown twenty-two or twenty-three years later in the destruction of the holy city and in the final dispersion of the Jewish race.

**Which are read every Sabbath day.** How wildly foolish does the conduct of the Jewish rulers seem to those who calmly review the whole story of the chosen people! For these very priests and scribes, who gloried in their reverential care for the 'law and the prophets,' to fall into the awful sin these holy writings foreshadowed, seems an act of blind folly almost inconceivable.

*The Argument of the following ten verses, 28-37, is as follows:—*

(1) Vers. 28, 29. The Jews put the innocent Jesus to death, and then laid Him in the grave.

(2) Vers. 30, 31. But God raised Him from the dead; and of the resurrection we possess many eye-witnesses.

(3) Vers. 32, 33. In this resurrection of Jesus, God hath fulfilled His great promise to the fathers of Israel, for it is His resurrection which is the great proof of His Messiahship.

(4) Vers. 34-37. The Risen One, according to the Word of God contained in the writings of the prophets, will never die.

**Ver. 28. And though they found no cause of death in him.** They accused Jesus of blasphemy and sedition, but were utterly unable to prove either charge.

**Ver. 29. All that was written of him.** That is, the various indignities predicted in those prophecies which speak of the sufferings of Messiah. Compare, for instance, Ps. xxii.; Isa. liii.; Zech. xi. 12, 13, xii. 10-xiii. 7.

**They took him down from the tree, and laid him in a sepulchre.** The burial and probably the act of taking the body from the cross, was actually performed by the hands of friends, like Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea; but in Paul's rapid summary of the terrible facts, it was not judged necessary to make any distinction between the various agents in the transaction; besides which, to the *letter* even the statement is strictly accurate. Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus were both of them rulers.

**Ver. 30. But God raised him from the dead.** Paul with great force and power here contrasts the work of God with the work of men. *Men* rejected, scorned, and then crucified Jesus; *God* raised Him from the dead.

**Ver. 31. And he was seen many days of them.** This was the most convincing proof of the Messiahship of Jesus. It was a proof which the apostles in their preaching ever used with great power. With these first teachers of Christianity the resurrection of their crucified Master rested on no tradition, however well supported and attested, but on the testimony of many living men who had *seen*, and *touched*, and *talked* with the Lord Jesus after that He was risen from the dead.

**Which came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem.** This refers especially to those Galilean disciples who were with Him on His last journey to Jerusalem. Some of the holy women are here included, and many others whose names are not preserved. We know from Paul's letter to the Corinthians that there were over five hundred of these eye-witnesses of some part or other of the Lord's second life on earth (1 Cor. xv. 6).

**Ver. 32. And we declare unto you.** And thus, Paul went on to say, while the apostles and eye-witnesses are at this moment carrying out *their* mission in the Holy Land to the Jews, *we* (Paul and Barnabas) are preaching to you in these distant lands the same glad truths.

**Ver. 33. God hath fulfilled.** The Greek word here may be rendered 'hath completely fulfilled,'—*completely*, because in the resurrection which is here about to be mentioned, the ascension and exaltation of Messiah are both involved.

**In the second psalm.** Some of the fathers and one ancient MS. read here, 'in the first psalm.' This singular variation is accounted for by the first psalm being frequently not numbered, but simply looked at as a psalm of introduction. It is not the custom of Paul or the New Testament writers to quote so exactly as in this instance, never giving the number of the chapter or the psalm whence the reference was drawn; the exception in this case was probably owing to the high importance attached by the early Christian teachers to this great Messianic prophecy appearing as it does on the first page, so to speak, of the sacred psalter.

**Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.** The Eternal speaks in this psalm to Messiah, 'Thou art my Son, to-day—the day of Thy resurrection—I have declared Thee—have exhibited Thee as begotten.' He had been the Son of God from all eternity; but by His triumphant resurrection after His humiliation He was openly declared or shown to be so. Paul later expands the same great thought: 'He (Jesus Christ) was declared to be the Son of God with power, by the resurrection from the dead' (Rom. i. 4).

**Ver. 34. No more to return to corruption.** That is to say, Christ will never again endure death—death which is invariably followed by corruption. His sacred body, however, underwent no change or corruption while it lay in the grave; so that here 'to return to corruption' is simply 'to die.' The doctrine of the eternity of Christ's existence is often urged by Paul (see especially Rom. vi. 9). We can trace in this and in other sermons of the Gentile apostle, outlines of the great arguments and doctrines which he afterwards pressed home with so much power in his epistles.

**I will give you the sure mercies of David.** The literal translation of these words is more forcible: 'I will give to you (perform to you) the holy and sure mercies of David.' This quotation slightly varies from the words, but fully expresses the sense of the original (Isa. lv. 3). One of these *mercies* was a promise to David that after he (the King) had fulfilled his allotted days and slept with his fathers, God would raise up a successor of his house, whose reign should be perpetual, the throne of whose kingdom God would establish for ever (see 2 Sam. vii. 13 and 16). This 'promise' Paul tells them belongs 'to them,' that is, to them and all who accept the salvation he was offering them in his Master's name; and the promise was, that a king Messiah should appear, whose reign should be



perpetual. Now Jesus, whom Paul preached, had been shown to be the Messiah by His resurrection: the promise, then, made it certain that He (Jesus) would live and reign for ever, without any more interruption by death or corruption.

Ver. 35. *Wherefore he saith also in another psalm, Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.* He, that is, God; as in the preceding verse, 'He (God) said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David.' Although in the psalm quoted (xvi.) David is speaking, he is only speaking evidently the words put into his mouth by God. David is the interpreter, so to speak, of the Holy Spirit. Although the body of Jesus was laid in the tomb, *it underwent no corruption*, and until the day of resurrection lay as though on a couch (see Calvin's note here).

Ver. 36. *For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep.* The words of the psalm just quoted were spoken certainly by King David, but they cannot possibly find their fulfilment in him, for an everlasting salvation was promised through a Messiah who should reign for ever; but when David had accomplished his allotted work, he died, full of years and honours certainly, the man after God's own heart, and with all his errors and shortcomings a great and magnificent sovereign; but, when he reached the usual term of human life, *he fell on sleep.*

*And was laid with his fathers.* The word of the original Hebrew and also in the Greek version of the LXX. is a distinct recognition of the existence of the soul after death. The soul went to Sheol, the place where the souls of the departed rest; there the souls of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the fathers of David, already were. It is a different expression to any of those used for death and burial. (See Gesenius on the Hebrew original of this word used Gen. xxv. 8, xxxv. 29; 2 Kings xxii. 20; Judg. ii. 10.)

*Saw corruption.* That is to say, the body, the mortal part, of King David.

*Third Division of the Sermon—Paul declares to the Congregation of the Synagogue at Antioch the Doctrine of Justification by Faith in Jesus, 38, 39—Solemn Warning against Rejection of Messiah, 40, 41.*

Ver. 38. *Through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins.* Paul having now shown that in Jesus the Crucified and Risen One all the great prophecies concerning Messiah were fully accomplished, solemnly declares to his listeners that the Messianic blessings of forgiveness and justification can alone proceed from Him, and will only be shared by those who receive Him as their Lord. Thus at the close of the Antioch sermon the Gentile apostle gives us the first rough outline of that great doctrine of Justification by Faith—the doctrine which in after years, guided by the Holy Spirit, Paul laid open in all its marvellous fulness when he wrote to the Church of Rome his great epistle which tells of the mysteries of the Cross of Christ.

Ver. 39. *By him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.* In other words, Paul said to them, 'Jesus Christ, if ye believe on Him as Messiah, will do for you what the Law could not do. In Him shall you be justified from all your sins—that is, you shall be freed from the galling chains and fetters of guilt.'

In these words at the close of the Antioch sermon Paul proclaims that in Jesus Christ the Messiah all men may find peace, and may obtain forgiveness of every sin. He gently puts aside the Law—in which the Jews had trusted—as incapable of procuring in any way for those who submitted to it, forgiveness and reconciliation with God. He shows to them a new and better way of approaching the Eternal—a way, too, which he points out may be trodden by all alike, by Gentiles as well as by Jews.

Ver. 40. *In the prophets.* The general warnings contained in that volume of the Old Testament Scriptures so named by the Jews. They are to beware lest the terrible denunciations of the old prophets find their fulfilment in them.

Ver. 41. *Behold, you despisers, and wonder and perish.* The quotation is from the LXX. Version of Hab. i. 5. The prophet in the first instance refers to an invasion of the land by the Chaldeans. But the words of Habakkuk reached far beyond the temporary punishment inflicted by the Chaldean invasion; they reproached another and greater sin than even that which dishonoured the unhappy land in the prophet's days. The sin which he now warned Israel against committing was the deliberate rejection of the long-promised Messiah; and the punishment in which the despisers of Jesus would perish was carried out to its bitter end only a few years after Paul's words were spoken in the Antioch synagogue, in the destruction of the Holy City and the utter and complete ruin of the whole Jewish nation.

*Further Preaching of Paul and Barnabas in Antioch, 42-49.*

Ver. 42. *And when the Jews were gone out of the synagogue, the Gentiles besought that these words might be preached to them the next Sabbath.* The reading of the more ancient MSS. here is as follows, 'And as they were going out they besought,' the interpolated words being introduced either from a desire to make the sense clearer, or perhaps because an ancient Church lesson began at this place, some words were judged needful to explain the context. Neander says the procedure may have been this:—As Paul and Barnabas were going out before the general dispersion of the assembly, the rulers of the synagogue may have requested that they would repeat their discourse on the next Sabbath. The people having then withdrawn, many of the Jews and proselytes followed the speakers for the purpose of declaring their assent to what they had heard, or of seeking further instruction.

Ver. 43. *To continue in the grace of God.* No doubt the very words of Paul used to these Jews and proselytes who followed the missionaries to their temporary home in the city. It was a very favourite expression of his (see Acts xx. 24; 1 Cor. xv. 10; 2 Cor. vi. 1; Gal. ii. 21).

Ver. 44. *And the next Sabbath day came almost the whole city together.* During the week which had passed since the first preaching of Paul, the apostles had doubtless been earnestly engaged in teaching and spreading their doctrines in private assemblies and meetings; and the result was a very great concourse of people on the following Sabbath day in and round the Jewish synagogue. The doctrine of Messiah as preached by Paul seems to have been welcomed with readiness by these peoples of Asia Minor.

Ver. 45. When the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy. It is the Jews only, not the proselytes, who were enraged at the sight of the crowds who flocked to hear the stranger missionaries. The old exclusive pride of the race of Abraham was stirred up at the thought of these masses of idolaters sharing with the chosen people in all the promised glories of Messiah's kingdom.

It was this feeling which prompted the bitter opposition we hear of in the next clause.

**Spoke against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming.** Denying the application of the various Messianic prophecies quoted by the apostles, and most probably accusing and denying that Holy One whose Cross and Resurrection formed the central point of the stranger missionaries' preaching.

Ver. 46. It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you. Necessary because the Master had so commanded it (Acts i. 8; Rom. i. 16); necessary because this was part of the Divine plan. This was, however, merely a command in reference to priority. Gentiles would have been admitted into the kingdom of God even if the Jews had not rejected the Lord Jesus. The apostles do not seem to have attempted either to meet the Jews' argument or to have tried to refute their blasphemies. From their haughty refusal to share with Gentiles the glories of Messiah's kingdom, the missionaries recognised at once that these self-willed, stubborn men had condemned themselves as unworthy to partake of the blessed promises of Messiah; and so they simply pronounced the words, 'Lo, we turn to the Gentiles.'

Ver. 47. I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldst be for salvation unto the ends of the earth. The apostles now show the assembled crowds that it was no momentary impulse of anger which had moved them to that solemn declaration of their intention to speak directly to the Gentile world. It was in obedience to the word of the Lord, spoken centuries before by the mouth of Isaiah (Isa. xlix. 6). They could see, then, in their own sacred oracles, that the work of Messiah was not by any means to be confined to the Jews. A far grander field was to be subjected to the influence of His blessed Spirit. For similar indications of Messianic blessings to be poured on the Gentile nations, see Isa. ii. 1-10, xlii. 6. On the threshold of the Gospel story, too, we find the aged Simeon, who, though waiting for the consolation of *Israel*, yet saluting the rising of the same glorious Light over the darkened Gentile lands (Luke ii. 32).

Ver. 48. And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord. These Heathens openly expressed their joy and gratitude when they found from Paul that even in the sacred and jealously guarded oracles of the Hebrew race, *they* too, who had no connection with the Land of Promise, and who could claim no kinship to the chosen people, were *all* included in the grand scheme of salvation by Messiah.

And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed. This famous statement has given rise to much and at times even to bitter controversy. There are two schools of interpretation, both supported by distinguished scholars and exegetes.

The one school we will term A., endeavours to set aside the ordinary rendering of the Greek word translated 'ordained' as in the English Version, as 'præordinati' in the Vulgate, as 'destinati' by Augustine, and in place of it to substitute an expression which would bring prominently forward *human effort* rather than *God's predestination*. The best example of this school perhaps is that translation which takes the Greek word rendered 'ordained' in a military sense, and thus gives the passage: 'And whosoever belonged to the company of those who hoped (or endeavoured) to obtain eternal life, believed.' This rendering gives an admirable sense, and at the same time removes from the passage all reference to the 'decretum absolutum' which Calvin finds so distinctly put forward here; but, as it has been truly observed, the context affords no ground at all for such an interpretation of the word. There is no doubt that the only admissible explanation is the one adopted by the other school of interpretation which we will term B. Preserving then rigidly the rendering of the English Version, we have to determine what meaning should be attached to the words '*ordained to eternal life*.' Those 'ordained' are they of whom Holy Scripture so often speaks as '*The Chosen*,' '*The Called of God*,' all spiritual life, be it remembered, in its origin, progress, and completion, being from Him and His eternal counsel alone. But, on the other hand, this and similar clear declarations of God's sovereignty in no wise exclude man's perfect free-will. We have equally plain authoritative statements that God willeth *all* to be saved; and He teaches us *none* shall perish except by wilful rejection of the truth.

Dean Alford's words in a very able note on Rom. viii. 28 are golden: 'God's sovereignty (which includes His elective and predestinating decrees) on the one side, man's free-will on the other, are plainly declared to us. All attempts to bridge over the gulf between the two in the present imperfect condition of man are futile. . . . Our duty and our wisdom is to receive, believe, and to act on both these Divine statements.'

**Believed.** That is, made a public profession of their faith.

Ver. 49. And the word of the Lord was published throughout all that region. Antioch in Pisidia now evidently became a centre whence Christianity was diffused through all the neighbouring country.

Ver. 50. The devout and honourable women. Strabo, quoted by Howson (*Sz. Paul*, chap. vi.), makes special mention of the position of the female sex in the towns of Western Asia, and speaks in strong terms of the power which they possessed and exercised in controlling and modifying the religious opinions of the men.

**And the chief men of the city.** Most probably the husbands and kinsmen of the devout and honourable women just referred to.

**Raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts.** Pisidian Antioch was at this time a Roman colony; but we read of no attempt on the part of the Jews to excite the Roman magistrates against the Christian party. The persecution was probably a tumultuous outbreak, and the apostles for the sake of peace retired from the place. We find them in Acts xiv. 21 again in the city. They would hardly have returned so soon, had they



been formally banished by the act of the Roman government.

Ver. 51. **They shook off the dust of their feet against them**, acting thus in accordance with the Master's command (Luke ix. 5). The scribes taught that the dust of a heathen land defiled by the touch. Hence the shaking of the dust off the feet implied that the city was regarded as profane.

**Came unto Iconium.** This city was celebrated in the Middle Ages as the capital of the Seljukian Sultans. It was the first stage in the long and brilliant career of the Ottoman Turks. Iconium, Broussa, Adrianople, and lastly Constantinople, have been successively the capital cities of their vast empire. At the time of the visit of Paul and Barnabas, Iconium was a populous city and the capital of a distinct territory, and was ruled by a tetrarch. At the present time it is a town of about 30,000 inhabitants; it is still called Konieh, but travellers relate that little if anything remains

of Greek or Roman Iconium, save a few ancient inscriptions and fragments of sculpture which are built into the Turkish walls. It is about fifty miles east of Pisidian Antioch, near the foot of Mount Taurus. One curious relic of its former rank in the Ottoman monarchy it retains in the family of an ancient sovereign race, whose head, when a new sultan is proclaimed in Constantinople, always waives his right to the Ottoman throne in favour of the heir of the reigning house of Osman.

Ver. 52. **And the disciples were filled with joy, and with the Holy Ghost.** The members of the Antioch Church, instead of being depressed and disheartened by the enforced departure of their teachers, Paul and Barnabas, conscious of the intense happiness which had now become their inheritance as Christians, were 'filled with joy and with the Holy Ghost.'

Chrysostom tells us how the sufferings of a



Iconium.

Master, far from discouraging the disciple, gives fresh ardour to his purpose.

#### EXCURSUS.

##### ON THE JEWISH SYNAGOGUE.

The Synagogue was the connecting link between the *Temple* of Jerusalem and the *Church* of the Christians. It was the *synagogue* and its services which prepared the mind of those Jews who, obeying the command of the Master, laid the foundation of the Christian Church. It was in the *synagogue* that the Jews first learned how to dispense with the elaborate ceremonial of sacrifice and offering which the Jews of old time considered the one way to approach the Eternal. It was in those countless *synagogues* which arose in distant countries during the rule of the Ptolemys in Egypt, and subsequently when Roman rule was making the West and much of the East one nation, that the scattered people, many of whom had never seen

Jerusalem and the Temple, worshipped the Eternal without the aid of priest or Levite every Sabbath day with a more spiritual though perhaps with a less ceremonial service.

It is generally supposed that the 'synagogue,' as we understand the term, arose during the Captivity; though the frequent references *before* the Captivity to the schools of the prophets, the words of Ps. lxxiv. 8, and more certainly Acts xv. 21, and rabbinic tradition, point to a more ancient date for these congregational meetings, than the period of the Captivity of Babylon.

These synagogues—in some places small and unpretending, such as we may imagine the place by the river-side near Philippi (Acts xvi. 13);—in the greater cities of the empire, such as Alexandria, were large and magnificent. The internal arrangements seem to have but little changed. We read of the closed ark on the side of the building nearest to Jerusalem, where the rolls of the Law were kept; the desk in the centre, where the reader

read the book of the Law and spoke to the people; the seats all round the building for the men; the women apart in a gallery or behind a screen of lattice-work; the chief seats for the rulers or elders of the synagogue. In all times the service of these synagogues seems to have varied but slightly, and was of course the model which has been copied in the services of the various Christian churches. There were in use set forms of prayer, and regular lessons for each Sabbath day chosen from the Law and the Prophets; and after the reading from the holy books, a sermon was usually delivered by one of the elders of the congregation or by a stranger of known learning and ability. Our Lord was often asked to deliver the discourse in the synagogue in which He happened to be present. Paul, too, as in Antioch (Acts xiii.), seems frequently to have received a similar invitation. The ruler of the synagogue superintended the affairs and arranged the services; with the ruler were associated a council of elders. There was a special person appointed to lead the devotions of the worshippers as reader of the prayers. He was often termed the 'angel.' A minister, as in Luke iv. 20, was in charge of the building, and took care of the sacred books.

These persons were set apart for their several holy offices by imposition of hands. The synagogue was used also for purposes of instruction and religious disputation.

These synagogues in the time of our Lord seem to have possessed among the people judicial functions; they watched with jealous eyes over the faith of which they were the guardians. Allusion to this judicial authority is made in Matt. x. 17, xxiii. 34; Acts xxii. 19, xxvi. 11.

#### THE CHURCH OF ANTIOCH.

In the year 44-45 Jerusalem ceased to be the central point of Christian activity. For the first twelve years after the resurrection of the Founder of the religion, the history of Christianity could be written in two distinct records, both treating of the same period—the one telling of its marvellous progress in spite of persecution and opposition from the great and powerful; the other detailing its internal struggles to free itself from the restraints of Judaism.

For the first few years the followers of Jesus seemed to the ordinary observer but a narrow though enthusiastic band of Hebrew separatists; and such they would probably have remained had not the Master, ruling invisibly from His glory-throne in heaven, watched over His work, and raised up such men as Stephen, and Barnabas, and Paul, who, under the guidance of the Holy Ghost, first grasped the idea of a Church world-wide, of a great society to be made up of all races—of Gentiles as well as Jews.

The church of Jerusalem was too powerfully influenced by local associations ever to have freed itself from the trammels of Hebrew prejudice; besides which, a hopeless attempt to carry out a beautiful idea impoverished and fatally weakened the influence of the mother church of Christianity. The leading spirits among the Jerusalem Christians, without positively enforcing, certainly encouraged a voluntary sharing of property among its members. The result of such a life, as might have been expected, was a general state of extreme poverty, the ordinary stimulus to all commercial industry and enterprise being removed. But while the Jerusalem Church was thus being gradually impoverished by its communistic policy, and owing to its close connection with Jewish memories and customs, while increasing in numbers, seemed likely to be permanently confined to the narrow limits of a Hebrew sect,—nobler, certainly, and more spiritual than the great mass of Jews from whom this sect had separated, but still Hebrew and exclusive,—a new centre of Christian life had silently arisen. The religion of Jesus after the year 35-36 had rapidly made its way into the hearts and homes of many a dweller in the great Syrian city, Antioch. The Christianity of Antioch was a more robust, more comprehensive religion than the Christianity of Jerusalem. It was free from the narrow prejudices of the mother church. In the restless Gentile city there was no time-honoured temple with its sacred ritual, so dear to every Jew; there was no glorious history of a storied past to influence the Jewish Christian,—a great Church, free and all-embracing, had rapidly grown up in Syrian Antioch.

It was this church of Antioch which so generously came forward to the assistance of the mother church at Jerusalem when the great famine of 44 and the following years had begun to press hardly upon the numerous poor congregations of the Holy City; and from this time onward it is the church of this Syrian city which we must regard as the centre of Christian life and progress. It was in Antioch that the first great missionary expeditions were organised; it was from Antioch that Paul and Barnabas, Mark and Silas, started on their noble enterprises. It was to Antioch that they returned to tell the story of their toils and their success.

With the change of capital a new era dawned on Christianity. Henceforth the religion of Jesus was no longer confined to Palestine or Syria; it was proclaimed with strange rapidity in the chief centres of Asia Minor, Greece, Egypt, and Italy: the glad sound of its good news was soon heard in the more distant of the isles of the Gentiles. It was to be no longer merely the faith of an earnest sect of reformed Jews: it was to be preached as the religion of the world.

## CHAPTER XIV.

*The Apostles Paul and Barnabas at Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe—  
The Return to Antioch in Syria.*

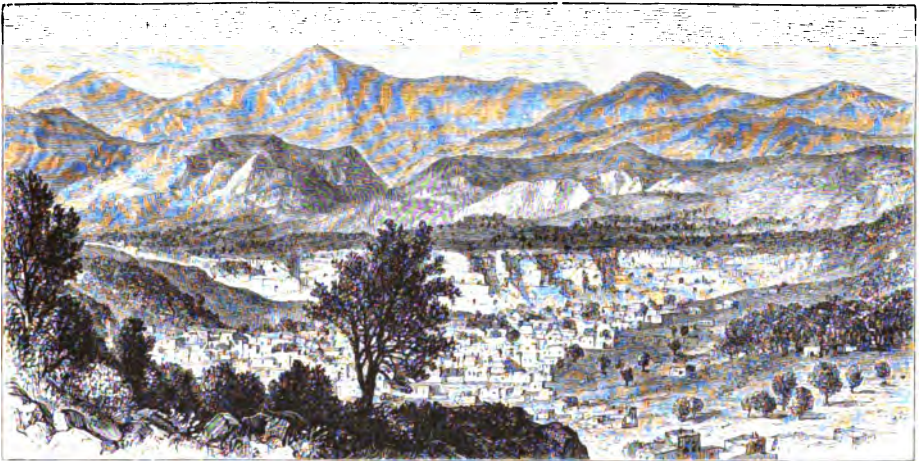
- 1 **A**ND it came to pass in <sup>a</sup>Iconium, that they went *both* <sup>a</sup>Vers. 19, 21, together <sup>b</sup>into the synagogue of the Jews, and so spake, ch. xiii. 51, that a great multitude both of the Jews and *also* of the Greeks <sup>b</sup>xvi. 2; <sup>c</sup>Tim. iii. 11. believed. But <sup>c</sup>the unbelieving <sup>d</sup>Jews <sup>d</sup>stirred up the Gentiles, <sup>d</sup>See ch. xiii. 14; <sup>e</sup>Ch. xvii. 5 (Gk.); <sup>f</sup>Rom. xv. 31. and <sup>f</sup>made their minds evil affected <sup>f</sup>against <sup>f</sup>the brethren. <sup>f</sup>Ch. xiii. 50 (Gk.).
- 2 Long time therefore abode they <sup>f</sup>speaking boldly in the Lord, <sup>f</sup>See Jo. xxi. 23; <sup>g</sup>which gave testimony unto <sup>g</sup>the word of his grace, and <sup>g</sup>See ch. iv. 29. <sup>h</sup>granted <sup>h</sup>signs and wonders to be done by their hands. But <sup>h</sup>Ch. xv. 8 (Gk.). See <sup>i</sup>the multitude of the city was divided: and <sup>i</sup>part held with the <sup>i</sup>Mk. xvi. 20. <sup>j</sup>Jews, and part with the <sup>j</sup>apostles. And when there was an <sup>j</sup>Ch. xx. 32. assault <sup>k</sup>made both of the Gentiles, and *also* of the Jews with <sup>k</sup>See Jo. iv. 48; ch. v. 12. <sup>l</sup>their rulers, <sup>l</sup>to use *them* despitefully, and <sup>l</sup>to stone them, <sup>l</sup>See ch. xxviii. 24.
- 3 They were <sup>m</sup>ware of *it*, and <sup>m</sup>fled unto <sup>m</sup>Lystra and <sup>m</sup>Derbe, <sup>m</sup>Ver. 14. cities of <sup>n</sup>Lycaonia, and <sup>n</sup>unto the region that lieth round about: <sup>n</sup>Cp. Jo. xiii. 16 (Gk.); <sup>o</sup>Rom. xvi. 7; <sup>o</sup>2 Cor. viii. 23 (Gk.); <sup>p</sup>Phil. ii. 25 (Gk.); <sup>p</sup>Rev. ii. 2?
- 4 And there they preached the gospel. <sup>p</sup>Mat. xxii. 6; <sup>q</sup>Lu. xviii. 32; <sup>q</sup>1 Thes. ii. 2 in the Gk. <sup>r</sup>So 2 Tim. iii. 11.
- 5 And there sat a certain man at <sup>r</sup>Lystra, impotent in *his* feet, <sup>r</sup>Cp. ver. 19. <sup>s</sup>being <sup>s</sup>a cripple from his mother's womb, who never had <sup>s</sup>Ch. xii. 12 (Gk.).
- 6 walked: The same heard Paul speak: <sup>t</sup>who <sup>t</sup>stedfastly be- <sup>t</sup>Se: Mat. x. 23. holding him, and <sup>u</sup>perceiving that he had faith <sup>u</sup>to be healed, <sup>u</sup>Vers. 8, 21; ch. xvi. 1, 2; <sup>v</sup>2 Tim. iii. 11.
- 7 Said with a loud voice, Stand upright on thy feet. And he <sup>v</sup>Ver. 20; ch. xvi. 1, xx. 4. <sup>w</sup>leaped <sup>w</sup>and walked. And when the people saw what Paul <sup>w</sup>Ver. 11. <sup>x</sup>had done, they <sup>x</sup>lifted up their voices, <sup>x</sup>saying in the speech of <sup>x</sup>Ch. iii. 2 (Gk.). <sup>y</sup>Lycaonia, <sup>y</sup>The gods are come down to us in the likeness of <sup>y</sup>See Lu. iv. 20. <sup>z</sup>men. And they called Barnabas, Jupiter; and Paul, Mercu- <sup>z</sup>See Mat. ix. 20. <sup>aa</sup>rius, <sup>aa</sup>because he was the chief speaker. Then the priest of <sup>aa</sup>See Mk. x. 52. Jupiter, which was before their city, <sup>ab</sup>brought oxen and gar- <sup>ab</sup>See ch. iii. 8. <sup>ac</sup>lands unto <sup>ac</sup>the gates, and <sup>ac</sup>would have done sacrifice with the <sup>ac</sup>See Lu. xi. 27. <sup>ad</sup>people. <sup>ad</sup>Which when <sup>ad</sup>the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard <sup>ad</sup>Ver. 6. <sup>ae</sup>of, <sup>ae</sup>they rent their clothes, and <sup>ae</sup>ran in among the people, <sup>ae</sup>So ch. viii. 10, xxviii. 6. <sup>af</sup>crying out, And saying, Sirs, <sup>af</sup>why do ye these *things*? We <sup>af</sup>See Lu. xvi. 20. <sup>ag</sup>also are men <sup>ag</sup>of like passions with you, and preach unto you <sup>ag</sup>So Dan. ii. 43 compared with Ezra vi. 10. <sup>ah</sup>that ye should <sup>ah</sup>turn from these <sup>ah</sup>vanities <sup>ah</sup>unto <sup>ah</sup>the living <sup>ah</sup>See ver. 4. <sup>ai</sup>God, <sup>ai</sup>which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all <sup>ai</sup>Jas. v. 17 (Gk.). <sup>aj</sup>See Josh. iii. 10; Mat. xvi. 16.

<sup>a</sup> Mat. xxvi. 65. See Gen. xlii. 13.<sup>b</sup> See ch. xv. 19.<sup>c</sup> See Deut. xxxii. 21.<sup>d</sup> So 1 Sam. xii. 21; 1 Cor. viii. 4.<sup>e</sup> Cited from Ps. cxlvi. 6.<sup>f</sup> So Rev. xiv. 7.<sup>g</sup> Cp. ch. xvii. 24.<sup>h</sup> See Gen. i. 1.<sup>i</sup> Chap. xvi. 29 (Gk.).<sup>j</sup> See ch. x. 26.<sup>k</sup> See Jas. v. 17 (Gk.).<sup>l</sup> See Josh. iii. 10; Mat. xvi. 16.<sup>m</sup> See ver. 4.<sup>n</sup> See ver. 6.<sup>o</sup> See ch. viii. 10, xxviii. 6.<sup>p</sup> See Lu. xvi. 20.<sup>q</sup> So Dan. ii. 43 compared with Ezra vi. 10.<sup>r</sup> See ver. 4.<sup>s</sup> See ver. 6.<sup>t</sup> So ch. viii. 10, xxviii. 6.<sup>u</sup> See Lu. xvi. 20.<sup>v</sup> So Dan. ii. 43 compared with Ezra vi. 10.<sup>w</sup> See ver. 4.<sup>1</sup> The older authorities read the 1st aorist here, translate 'the Jews who were disobedient.'<sup>2</sup> The translation here should run, 'stirred up the souls (or minds) of the Gentiles, and made them evilly disposed,' etc.<sup>3</sup> The older authorities omit 'and;' instead of 'granted' render 'granting.'<sup>4</sup> instead of 'assault' render 'movement.'<sup>5</sup> The older authorities omit 'being.'<sup>7</sup> sprang up<sup>8</sup> voice<sup>10</sup> the city, the older authorities omitting 'their.'<sup>6</sup> speaking<sup>9</sup> or 'Zeus and Hermes.'<sup>11</sup> vain thoughts





LYSTRA.



DERBE.



ATTALIA.



16 *things* that are therein: Who in times past <sup>13</sup> "suffered all  
 17 nations <sup>o</sup> to walk in their own ways. <sup>2</sup> Nevertheless he left not  
 himself without witness, in that he did good, and <sup>9</sup> gave us <sup>13</sup>  
 rain <sup>14</sup> from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our <sup>13</sup> hearts  
 18 with <sup>r</sup> food and <sup>4</sup> gladness. And with these sayings scarce  
 restrained they the people, that *they* had not done sacrifice <sup>15</sup>  
 unto them.

19 And <sup>4</sup> there came thither *certain* Jews from "Antioch and  
 "Iconium, who persuaded <sup>16</sup> the people, and <sup>w</sup> having stoned  
 Paul, drew <sup>17</sup> *him* out of the city, supposing he had been dead.

20 Howbeit, as the disciples stood round about him, he rose up,  
 and came into the city: and the next day he departed with  
 21 Barnabas to <sup>x</sup> Derbe. And when they had preached the gospel  
 to that city, and had taught many, <sup>18</sup> they returned *again* <sup>19</sup> to  
 22 <sup>r</sup> Lystra, and to <sup>v</sup> Iconium, and "Antioch, <sup>s</sup> Confirming the souls  
 of the disciples, and <sup>20</sup> <sup>a</sup> exhorting *them* to continue in the faith,  
 and that <sup>b</sup> we must through much tribulation <sup>21</sup> enter into the  
 23 kingdom of God. And when they had <sup>c</sup> ordained them <sup>d</sup> elders  
 in every church, and had prayed with <sup>e</sup> fasting, they <sup>f</sup> com-  
 24 mended them to the Lord, on whom they believed. And after  
 they had passed throughout <sup>f</sup> Pisidia, they came to Pamphylia.

25 And when they had preached <sup>22</sup> the word in <sup>k</sup> Perga, they went  
 26 down into Attalia: And thence sailed to <sup>i</sup> Antioch, <sup>k</sup> from  
 whence they had been <sup>l</sup> recommended to <sup>m</sup> the grace of God  
 27 for <sup>n</sup> the work which they fulfilled. And when they were come,  
 and had gathered the church together, they <sup>o</sup> rehearsed all that  
 God had done with them, and how he had <sup>p</sup> opened *the* door of  
 28 faith unto the Gentiles. And there <sup>23</sup> they abode long time  
 with the disciples.

<sup>13</sup> Ch. xiii. 3. / Ch. xv. 40.  
<sup>o</sup> Ch. xv. 4 (Gk.). See ch. xv. 3, 12, xxi. 19.

<sup>20</sup> See ch. xiii. 43.  
<sup>p</sup> 1 Cor. xvi. 9; 2 Cor. ii. 12; Col. iv. 3; Rev. iii. 8. Cp. Jo. x. 2, 3.

<sup>22</sup> Cp. Rev. iii. 2 (Gk.).  
<sup>23</sup> Cp. Jo. x. 2, 3.

<sup>13</sup> in past generations

<sup>13</sup> *The older authorities read, instead of 'us' and 'our,' 'you' and 'your.'*

<sup>14</sup> rains <sup>15</sup> better, 'from offering sacrifice.' <sup>16</sup> having persuaded

<sup>17</sup> they dragged him <sup>18</sup> and had made many disciples <sup>19</sup> omit 'again.'

<sup>20</sup> omit 'and.' <sup>21</sup> through many tribulations

<sup>22</sup> and having spoken <sup>23</sup> *The older authorities omit 'there.'*

*Residence of the Missionary Apostles in the City of Iconium, 1-6.*

Ver. 1. And it came to pass in Iconium (see note on the History of the City, chap. xiii. ver. 51). The success of Paul's preaching appears to have been unusually great in this place; and it was no doubt owing to the rapid spread of the doctrines preached by the apostles in Iconium and its neighbourhood that the jealousy of the Jewish leading men was excited, and the calumnies which resulted in the banishment of Paul and Barnabas were devised.

And also of the Greeks. There seems no reason to restrict the Greeks here mentioned to

those believers known as 'proselytes of the gate.' The reputation of Paul very likely attracted many of the dwellers in Iconium who had no connection with Judaism.

Ver. 2. But the unbelieving Jews. Gloag calls attention to the fact that of the numerous persecutions recorded in the 'Acts,' there were only two which were not occasioned by the Jews.

Stirred up the Gentiles. That is, rendered hostile. The Jews saw that all those privileges which belonged to the covenant people, and of which they were so jealously proud, would cease altogether to be their peculiar heritage if the Gentiles were admitted on the same terms into the kingdom of God. The very word here used by

the writer of the 'Acts,' *'the brethren,'*—the favourite expression by which the members of the Christian society used to designate themselves,—was especially obnoxious to the stubborn Jews, who refused to accept Christ as Messiah. To these unhappy men, the thought that 'believing Jews' and 'believing Gentiles' should constitute one holy brotherhood, was strangely hateful.

Ver. 3. **Long time.** This first mission of Paul and Barnabas is computed to have occupied between three and four years (see the note on ver. 27). The 'long time' may well be supposed to have included several months.

**In the Lord.** Their patient bravery found its grand support in the protection of Christ. Sustained by the invisible blessing of the Master ruling from His throne in heaven, undismayed by dangers ever thickening around them, the undaunted apostles boldly proclaimed the Gospel.

**And granted signs and wonders to be done by**



Lycæonian Soldier.

**their hands.** But, as was stated in ver. 1, the great multitudes were converted by the preaching of the Gospel before any miracle was performed. The miracles were wrought by Christ as a sign of His approval of His servants' work, apparently after the multitude had been gathered into His fold.

Ver. 5. **And when there was an assault made.** The Greek word hardly signifies an 'assault,' rather a 'sudden movement,' a 'hostile movement' or 'impulse' on the part of the Jews and Gentiles; it could not have been an open attack, as the apostles avoided violence and stoning by a timely flight. In his Second Epistle to the Corinthian Church (chap. xi. 25), Paul writes: 'Once was I stoned.' Paley observes here: 'Had this meditated assault at Iconium been completed, had the history related that a stone was thrown, as it relates that preparations were made both by Jews and Gentiles to stone Paul and his companions, or even had the account of this transaction stopped

without going on to inform us that "Paul and his companions were aware of the danger and fled," a contradiction between the history and epistle would have ensued. Truth is necessarily consistent, but it is scarcely possible that independent accounts not having truth to guide them should thus advance to the very brink of contradiction without falling into it.'

Ver. 6. **And fled unto Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycæonia.** Lycæonia extends from the ridges of Mount Taurus and the Cilician frontiers on the south to the hills of Cappadocia on the north. Travellers speak of it as a desolate country, without streams of water. Strabo even mentions one place where water was sold for money. Iconium was the principal city of this great district.

**Lystra.** This city possesses a post-apostolic history. In the records of early councils, the names of the Bishops of Lystra appear. The ruins, situated at the foot of a singular volcanic mountain named Kara Dagh (the Black Mountain), have been identified in modern days as the Lystra of early Christianity. The remains of this once famous city are called now by the singular name of Bin-bir Kilisseh, or the Thousand and One Churches, from the traces still visible of the numerous sacred edifices with which it was once adorned (see Lewin, *St. Paul*, 'The First Circuit').

**Derbe.** Little or nothing is known of this city. Its very ruins are only identified with doubt. Stephen of Byzantium speaks of Derbe as sometimes called Delbeia, which, in the speech of Lycæonia, signifies a 'juniper tree.' It is said that in post-apostolic times there was a Bishop of Derbe, who was a suffragan of the Metropolitan of Iconium.

*The Citizens of Lystra and Derbe, in Lycæonia, mistake the Missionary Apostles for Gods.—Paul's Lystrian Sermon, 7-19.*

Ver. 7. **And there they preached the gospel.** There appears to have been but few Jews in these parts. We hear of no synagogue at either Lystra or Derbe. The apostles would preach generally in the market-place, or in some public thoroughfare; but the great centre, doubtless, of their work was that house, in later days known in the churches as the home of Timothy, the greatest and most famous of the disciples of Paul. This was a family in which a Jewish woman was married to a Greek citizen. The deep piety of Lois and Eunice, the grandmother and mother of Timothy, their love for the traditions of the ancient covenant people on the one side, their Gentile connections on the other, supplied a link between the Jewish apostles and the people of Lycæonia. The church of Lystra was the first Christian church composed almost entirely of Gentiles.

Ver. 8. **And there sat a certain man at Lystra, impotent in his feet.** The incident here related was evidently no very unusual one in the life of these first great missionaries of the faith. But this Lystra miracle became famous in early Christian story, and was, no doubt, oftentimes related as the event which gave occasion to the first direct invitation from the founders of Christianity to the great heathen world, in the persons of the idolaters of Lystra in Lycæonia. The case of the baptism of Cornelius the Roman officer was the first advance out of the charmed circle of Judaism;



but Cornelius, though a Gentile, was no idolater. He was possibly even a 'proselyte of the gate,' and certainly was a worshipper of and a worker for the one true God. The scene of the healing, no uncommon one, reminds us 'of the manner in which those who carry the message of salvation to the heathen in the present day collect around them groups of listeners in Burmah and Hindostan. It was on one of these occasions, as Paul was preaching in some thoroughfare of the city, that the lame man heard him : his friends had placed him there perhaps to solicit alms' (Hackett *On the Acts*).

Ver. 9. **Perceiving that he had faith to be healed.** Something in the rapt gaze of the poor helpless cripple attracted Paul, who now looked on him earnestly, and saw something in the sufferer's face which moved him to utter the commanding words which possessed such strange awful power. The poor helpless man had heard, 'no doubt, the apostles' public teaching, and was convinced of the reality of the great redemption worked by the Master whose blessed message Paul preached. This conviction the apostle read in the upturned face of the afflicted one who lay helpless at his feet.

Ver. 10. **And he leaped and walked.** The lame man sprang up in his glad consciousness of a new power he had never felt before.—O strange miracle! Not only could he stand upright, he who ever since his child-days had sat and reclined, but he could now move and walk like other men whom he had for so many years watched and longed to imitate. Some critics of the cheerless school of Baur and Zeller have endeavoured to show that the story of this miracle was but a mere imitation of the miracle of Peter at the Beautiful Gate of the Temple related in Acts iii. Such criticism passes over such marked differences in the two incidents as the following. In Jerusalem the lame man merely desired and hoped to receive an alms from Peter and John, even after Peter had bidden him 'to look on' him and John. But the cripple at Lystra had already been an attentive hearer of Paul. At Lystra, the cripple at the word of Paul leaped up and walked; in Jerusalem, Peter took the lame man by the hand and lifted him up.

Ver. 11. **And when the people saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voices.** The whole incident was of so strange a nature that it at once took by storm the hearts of these impulsive Lycaonians. A well-known helpless cripple, as he sat doubtless in a spot where he had often sat before in a public thoroughfare of the city, at the bidding of the stranger sojourning among them,

in a moment was able to cast off his lifelong infirmity, and moved at once among them like any other strong and healthy man. This was no mortal's act. Surely the men who could speak the beautiful solemn words these strangers had been speaking, and do such mighty works as the restoring to health and strength such poor afflicted beings as the man before them, were no mere men, but were Divine.

**Saying in the speech of Lycaonia.** Hitherto the intercourse between the missionary apostles and the people of Lystra had been carried on in the Greek tongue, the ordinary language of commerce in the cities of Asia Minor; but now, surprised and excited, the Lystrians naturally returned to their native dialect, and in their hurried preparations to do honour to their supposed Divine visitors, they spoke one to another in their own familiar speech of Lycaonia. Scholars are divided in opinion respecting this language. Some think it was an Assyrian dialect, others suppose it was

merely a corrupt Greek, others assume it was a Galatian dialect. Stephen of Byzantium (fifth century) mentions this language as still existing.

The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men. The scene of the beautiful legend of Baucis and Philemon, who entertained Zeus (Jupiter) and Hermes (Mercury) when they came down to visit the homes of men, was in that very region, in the interior of Asia Minor. The story of the visit of the gods to Lycaonia was as follows. In return for the kind and hospitable welcome they had received from these two poor peasants, who un-



Jupiter and Mercury

awares entertained the two immortals Jupiter and Mercury, these deities, while punishing the churlish and inhospitable inhabitants of the land who had refused to receive the strangers, by overwhelming them and their homes in a terrible inundation, rewarded their kind hosts by changing their little lowly hut into a proud temple, at the altars of which Baucis and Philemon were appointed to minister to the chief of the gods whom they had received disguised as a poor stranger into their humble cottage home.

Ovid tells the story well and simply :—

'Here Jove with Hermes came : but in disguise  
Of mortal men concealed their deities :  
One laid aside his thunder, one his rod :  
And many toilsome steps together trod ;  
For harbour at a thousand doors they knocked,  
Not one of all the thousand but was locked ;  
At last a hospitable house they found  
An homely shed ; the roof not far from ground,  
Was thatched with reeds and straw together bound,  
There Baucis and Philemon lived.



From lofty roofs the gods repulsed before,  
Now stooping, entered through the little door,  
The man (their hearty welcome first express'd)  
A common settle drew for either guest.

The churlish neighbours were subsequently punished by a terrible flood which overwhelmed the surrounding country, while the hospitable kindly couple were amazed to see the strange change which befell their humble cottage :—

' Their little shed, scarce large enough for two,  
Seems from the ground increased, in height and bulk  
to grow.

A stately temple shoots within the skies:  
The crotchets of their cot in columns rise:  
The pavement polished marble they behold,  
The gates with sculpture graced, the spires and tiles  
of gold.'

—*Metamorphoses*, Book viii., Dryden's Translation.

In this temple the favoured pair were appointed to minister before the altars of their Divine guest. Before the gates of Lystra stood a temple of Zeus (Jupiter), and perhaps, as Ewald suggests, the legend of the appearance of the gods, somewhat as above related, was recited year by year at the great festival in this temple; and thus the credu-

lous people readily supposed the gods they worshipped, and who they fancied loved their land with a peculiar love, had visited once more the scenes of their former wandering.

Ver. 12. **And they called Barnabas, Jupiter; and Paul, Mercurius.** Barnabas they imagined to be Jupiter (Zeus), most likely from his older and more venerable appearance; while the less imposing figure of Paul better represented the attendant deity Mercury (Hermes), the persuasive, eloquent speaker. The traditions respecting the personal aspect of Paul represent him as of insignificant stature and bald, with a pallid complexion. His face and figure appear to have been markedly of the Hebrew type. But while to outward appearance he must have looked like some commonplace travelling Jew, his manner and address must have been singularly winning.

Ver. 13. **Then the priest of Jupiter, which was before their city.** The temple of Jupiter stood at the entrance of Lystra, and the explanation of the words, 'of Jupiter which was before their city,' may be found in the Pagan conception that the gods themselves were present in their temples.



Ancient Sacrifice.

**Brought oxen and garlands.** These garlands were to crown the oxen about to be sacrificed. Such floral crowns were also worn by those sacrificing. They were composed of the various plants and flowers sacred to the gods to whom the sacrifice was offered.

**Unto the gates.** The gates of the city are here evidently alluded to. Some commentators prefer to understand the expression as referring to the gates of the house where the apostles were lodging. This seems unlikely, as Paul and Barnabas evidently were quite ignorant of the preparations which were made to do them honour, until the report reached their ears, when they at once hurried out to stop the proceedings. The supposed deities were residing in the city, so the worshippers brought the offering to the city gates, as to the gates of the temple which held the divinity.

Ver. 14. **Which when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard of.** In this place, and also in ver. 4 of this chapter, Paul and Barnabas are styled apostles. These two distinguished and devoted men, after a long period of trial, were formally (Acts xiii. 2) set apart by the solemn act

of the Church of Antioch, acting under the express direction of the Holy Ghost, to this high and singular position in the community of Christians. The special work for which these new apostleships were created, was the great mission to Gentile lands. St. Paul makes mention of the rank of St. Barnabas, Gal. ii. 9, and even more definitely in 1 Cor. ix. 6.

(On the office of an apostle, see a short Excursus at the end of the chapter.)

**They rent their clothes.** This was the ordinary Jewish mode of expressing horror at hearing or seeing anything that was impious; the act consisted in tearing the garment from the neck in front down to the girdle. Preparations for this act of adoration must have been going on for some time. No doubt many of the awe-struck and amazed bystanders in the public place where the miracle of healing took place, exclaimed at once that the two strangers were the gods once more among them, and the word passed from mouth to mouth in Lystra; but the 'speech of Lycaonia' suggested nothing to the Hebrew apostles, and the preparations were all complete, and the victims

crowned with their garlands for the sacrifice, before the unsuspecting apostles were aware of the idolatrous homage which was intended for them.

**Ver. 15. Saying, Why do ye these things?** The argument of Paul's address to the Lystrian idolaters, as far as we are able to gather it from the very brief summary preserved to us here, seems to be as follows:—'Brothers, you must not look on us as in any way different to you: we are but men. And then, too, those gods whom ye take us to be, they are no gods at all. There is indeed a God whom you and your fathers have neglected, a God who made heaven and earth and sea, who though He has not given to you any direct written revelation concerning Himself, still those blessings, those recurring and ever-recurring life-giving powers of nature, seed-time and harvest-time, rain and sunshine, the thousand gifts of a bountiful Providence which serve to make glad the heart of man,—these blessings have spoken in times past with sufficient clearness to awaken the slumbering thoughts of men, and to direct their attention to the adoration of the one true God. In these things you Gentiles at least might have found the traces of an unseen watchful Providence—of a God at once beneficent and pure. But in the place of such a God, misreading the teachings of nature, you have set up as the object of your worship, imaginary beings wanton and impure, capricious, and characterized by all the worst and most ungovernable of the passions of men.' (This last thought, unexpressed in this brief abstract of the 'Acts,' constantly present in Paul's mind, necessarily follows the words of ver. 17.)

The thousand gifts of nature above alluded to seem every instant to call men to adore the loving all-Father who cares so tenderly for His children. Such an expression of a grateful heart is found in the beautiful words of the whole of Ps. civ., which commences with, 'Bless the Lord, O my soul.'

**We also are men of like passions with you.** In other words, 'We are men like you, subject like yourselves to suffering and to death.' The gods were regarded as blessed immortals, incapable of suffering and want, dwelling in their own serene atmosphere far removed from men, exempt from all pain and peril.

**And preach unto you.** Literally, 'and bring you glad tidings.' The glad tidings they brought were the object of the devoted missionaries' journey. They came into these distant lands not to receive Divine honours, but to tell them of a living God, who loved them with a love passing understanding.

**That ye should turn from these vanities.** Better rendered, 'from these vain things.' Probably here the preacher pointed with his hand to the temple of Jupiter before the city gates—vain things such as the lifeless idol shrined within; vain things such as Jupiter and Mercury. The whole discourse should be compared with the more elaborate sermon of Paul on the Hill of Ares (Mars) at Athens (Acts xvii. 23-31), and also with Rom. i. 19-32, where the responsibilities of the heathen are dwelt upon at considerable length. The same thoughts run through these three Pauline compositions.

**Ver. 17. And gave us rain from heaven.** This mention of 'rain from heaven' was an especial instance of Divine benevolence to the people of Lystra, as in the Lycaonian country water was so extremely scarce. In many Eastern countries this

'rain from heaven' was a most precious boon' (see Ps. civ. 13).

**Ver. 19. And there came thither certain Jews from Antioch.** With rare exceptions, the Jews stirred up every persecution suffered by Paul. The stubborn jealousy of the race felt that in Paul they had to fear one whose life's work was the breaking down the wall of partition which separated the Hebrew race from the rest of the world. The arrival of these enemies of Paul was no accidental circumstance; the news of the success of the apostles in Lystra had reached Iconium and Antioch in Pisidia, and they came to the scene of his successes to thwart him, and, if possible, to compass his destruction.

**Who persuaded the people, and, having stoned Paul.** The Lycaonians, we know, were proverbially fickle and faithless. It has been well said, 'How fickle the world is! they first bring garlands, then stones. Every generation ultimately stones its own gods; the only difference is found in the manner in which the stones are cast.' This 'stoning' shows that Jews at least prompted the cruel, murderous outrage. Stoning was peculiarly a Jewish punishment. The terrible experience at Lystra is alluded to by Paul in 2 Cor. xi. 25, possibly also in Gal. vi. 17, where he speaks of the marks of the Lord Jesus borne in his body.

**Ver. 20. As the disciples stood round about him.** His work in Lystra had not been in vain. Different to the awful night in Gethsemane when all forsook the arrested Master and fled, the disciples of Paul, undismayed by their master's arrest and execution, gathered round the poor scarred body of him they judged dead; and as they sorrowfully gazed on the pale disfigured features, the martyr rose up and walked among living men once more.

That this recovery of Paul after the cruel stoning was miraculous, is the natural, indeed the only inference. Several commentators suggest with great probability, that among that group of mourning disciples gathered that day at Lystra round the apostle's apparently lifeless body, was the young Timothy, who, no doubt, heard the story of the Cross from Paul's lips during that first visit of the apostle; nor is it an unlikely surmise which dates the enthusiastic and lifelong devotion of the young disciple from that morning when Paul suffered as Christ's faithful martyr.

**Ver. 21. And when they had preached the gospel to that city, and taught many.** The work at Derbe appears to have been very successful: the converts to the religion of Jesus were numerous, and the apostles evidently met with no opposition in any quarter here. Among their disciples at Derbe was that Gaius, mentioned Acts xx. 4. Paley calls attention to a striking undesigned coincidence between the history of the Acts of this portion of Paul's life and the Second Epistle to Timothy, iii. 11: 'In the apostolic history, Lystra and Derbe are commonly mentioned together; in 2 Tim. iii. 11, Antioch, Iconium, Lystra are mentioned, *not Derbe*. And the distinction will appear on this occasion to be accurate, for Paul in that passage is enumerating his persecutions; and although he underwent grievous persecutions in each of the three cities through which he passed to Derbe, at Derbe itself he met with none. The Epistle, therefore, in the names of the cities in the order in which they are enume-

rated, and in the place at which the enumeration stops, corresponds exactly with the history.'

**Ver. 22. Exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.** This seems to be the first exhortation to the then little Gentile church from the lips of inspired men. It contains a solemn truth, and is the sum of the whole teaching of Jesus. The happiness which awaits the redeemed in heaven can only be reached through an avenue of suffering. These first Gentile converts must learn the lesson every true-hearted Christian man or woman in every age has painfully had to learn, '*No cross, no crown.*' It has been very beautifully said: 'Thinkest thou that thou wilt enter into the kingdom of heaven without the cross and tribulation? But neither Christ nor any one of His most beloved friends and saints had the power or the will to do so. Ask any one of the triumphant citizens of heaven whom thou wilt, and they will all respond, "We attained to the glory of God by the cross and chastisements." . . . Carry the cross with a willing heart, and it will guide thee to the place where thy sorrows will end, and where thou wilt find all for which thy soul has longed' (Thomas Aquinas).

**Ver. 23. And when they had ordained them elders in every church.** This is rendered more accurately, 'And when they had appointed for them elders,' etc. There is some doubt here as to whether the Greek word—translated 'ordained,' or, more accurately, 'appointed'—signified that Paul and Barnabas simply conducted and guided the elections of the churches, or whether the two apostles themselves appointed these elders (or presbyters). The latter is the more probable, as in these new-formed communities, presbyters or elders chosen by Paul and Barnabas acting under the light of the Divine Spirit, would be more likely to command respect when the apostles were far away, than any elders chosen by popular voice.

(On the office of 'presbyter,' see Excursus B. at the end of the chapter.)

**Ver. 25. And when they had preached the word in Perga.** This was the second visit of the apostles to this place. On the first occasion they merely passed through it, now they formally preach the Gospel within its walls. The history of the 'Acts' says nothing of success, recounts no opposition. We conclude, therefore, that few converts were the result of the missionaries' labours. Apathy seems to have been the characteristic feature of the citizens; perhaps 'they cared for none of these things.'

**They went down into Attalia.** This was a port on the Pamphylian Gulf, at no great distance from the important city of Perga. It was built and named after Attalus Philadelphus, king of Pergamos, who had built this city in a convenient position for commanding the trade of Syria or Egypt. Attalia was famous in the story of the Crusades, under the name of Satalia, as the port whence King Louis of France, after his disastrous march through Anatolia, embarked with his knights and nobles for Antioch, leaving the plebeian crowd of infantry to perish at the foot of the Pamphylian hills, A.D. 1148.

It is now called Adalia, and is a harbour much frequented.

**Ver. 26. And thence they sailed to Antioch.** The famous Syrian Antioch is here meant. It

was from the Christian Church in Antioch that the Apostles Barnabas and Paul had received their commission to preach in the Gentile churches. They now returned to the same church to give a formal account of their mission.

**Ver. 27. They rehearsed all that God had done for them.** The exact time during which the apostles had been absent is uncertain; we have, however, two definite points of time to assist us in determining the length of time taken up in the First Missionary Journey.

Paul returned from Jerusalem to Antioch after having carried the alms from the Antioch Christians to the poor Jerusalem saints (see chap. xi. 29, 30, xii. 25), A.D. 44. In A.D. 51, Paul and Barnabas went up again to Jerusalem from the Antioch Church to confer with the elder apostles on the matter of the circumcision of the Gentile converts (chap. xv. 2).

Six years, then, were spent in Antioch and on the First Missionary Journey: out of those six years the most likely computation seems to be that which allows three or four years for the journey. The work accomplished, the account of which they formally gave to the Antioch presbytery, included the preaching in the island of Cyprus; and in those districts of Asia Minor termed then Pamphylia, Pisidia, and Lycaonia, four churches were founded and definitely organised, Antioch in Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe.

**Ver. 28. And there they abode long time.** The exact length of time during which they remained at Antioch is uncertain—certainly not less than two years were spent by Paul and Barnabas in the Syrian capital.

#### EXCURSUS A.

##### ON THE APOSTOLIC OFFICE.

Perhaps from the mysterious verse (Rev. xxi. 14), 'And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb,' an opinion has existed from very early times respecting the college of apostles being limited to the mystic number of twelve. Hence such interpretations of Holy Scripture which see in the twelve wells of Elim the twelve apostles foreshadowed, and in the threescore and ten palm trees a reference to the seventy disciples (Tertul. *adv. Marcion*). The name, however, and rank of apostle was not so strictly limited. James the Lord's brother is called an apostle (1 Cor. xv. 7).

In this passage others besides James are possibly included under the designation 'apostle.'

Andronicus and Junius, mentioned in Rom. xvi. 7, are certainly designated not merely as apostles, but as 'of note among the apostles'; and in 1 Thess. ii. 6, Sylvanus is probably included in the 'We, . . . the apostles of Christ,'—not Timothy, who is excluded from the apostolate by Paul in his opening salutation, 2 Cor. i. 1; Col. i. 1 (see Professor Lightfoot, *Epistle to the Galatians*; in his note on the Name and Office of an Apostle). Paul and Barnabas are directly called apostles in this chapter of the 'Acts,' and with the name Paul constantly assumes the rank and authority of an apostle, as in 1 Cor. i. 1, Rom. i. 1, and in many other places. Still, notwithstanding these certain instances of apostles in excess of the mystic number 'twelve,' of Paul and Bar-

nabas, and the more doubtful ones of Andronicus, Junius, and Sylvanus (Rom. xvi. 7; 1 Thess. ii. 6), the title and authority seem to have been restricted by certain indispensable conditions.

The first was—the apostle must have seen Christ. *He must have been an eye-witness of the resurrection.* Those few above alluded to may well have satisfied this indispensable condition, which would, of course, exclude all who did not belong to the generation contemporary with our Lord. Paul's case was a special one. The Risen One, after His ascension, showed Himself to His chosen missionary, and talked with him; but this privilege was vouchsafed to no other of the early Christian teachers, except to the Apostle John.

The second condition required was—that the actual call to the office should come directly from *the Church*; and the only record we possess of such a call closely connects the Church's official act with the direct instructions of the Holy Ghost (Acts xiii. 2, 3). The doubtfulness of the reference, direct or indirect, to any apostles other than the 'Fourteen' (perhaps with the exception of the three, Sylvanus, Andronicus, and Junius), the absence of any account of the Church's appointing any one except Barnabas and Paul to the high office, shows us clearly that the apostolate was certainly confined to very few. The especial work of the apostle was the oversight and care of all the churches in respect to church government and discipline. After that the Lord withdrew His visible presence from men, the Apostolic College formed the highest tribunal of appeal. They were also the inspired interpreters of the Divine system of salvation, and to this day their writings are held as the infallible rule of faith and life. They possessed—though they were not the solitary possessors of these high gifts—great powers, moral and spiritual, such as a brave, untired patience, heroic self-denial, the ability at times to work what we term supernatural signs and wonders (in the first age a few others were gifted with like

powers). When, however, the first century wore away, and these few leaders whom men call apostles—divinely chosen, and then officially commissioned by the Church—fell asleep, no attempt was made, either in the Palestinian or Gentile churches, to fill up the empty chairs. A feeling of awful reverence perhaps deterred the various Christian communities from attempting to supply their vacant places.

#### EXCURSUS B.

##### ON THE OFFICE OF PRESBYTER IN THE EARLY CHURCH.

The presbyterate of the Church of the first days was no new creation. The Christian Church in its earliest stage, as has been well said, 'was regarded by the body of the Jewish people as nothing more than a new sect springing up by the side of the old.' The term 'presbyter' or 'elder' was well known in the synagogue. It was applied to the rulers of these Jewish congregations.

They appear to have formed a college under the presidency of the chief rulers, and to have assisted him with their advice; upon this presbytery devolved in every synagogue the conduct of the religious affairs of the congregation.

The term in the first instance refers to age, and then derivatively to official dignity. On the formation of the first Gentile communities in Asia Minor, the organization of the synagogue was imitated as closely as possible, and the title and the functions of the elders of the synagogues were bestowed on those converts who from age or other special qualifications appeared to the apostles the best fitted to direct the religious services, and watch over the general interests of the new society. The duties of these presbyters, who, we read, were appointed by the two missionary apostles, were by no means confined to ruling and superintending; they were also, we know, instructors. Elsewhere (Eph. iv. 11), Paul styles them 'shepherds and teachers.'

## CHAPTER XV.

### *The question of Circumcision in the Gentile Churches—The First Council of the Church at Jerusalem.*

- 1 **A**ND <sup>a</sup>certain *men* which came down from Judea taught <sup>b</sup>the brethren, and said, 'Except ye be circumcised <sup>c</sup>after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved. When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and <sup>d</sup>disputation with them, they determined that <sup>e</sup>Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should <sup>f</sup>go up to Jerusalem unto the <sup>g</sup>apostles and <sup>h</sup>elders about this question. And <sup>i</sup>being brought on their way by the church, they passed through <sup>k</sup>Phenice <sup>l</sup>and <sup>m</sup>Samaria, <sup>n</sup>declaring the conversion of the Gentiles: and they <sup>o</sup>caused great joy unto all <sup>p</sup>the brethren. And when they were

<sup>a</sup> Cp. Gal. ii. 11-14. <sup>b</sup> Vers. 3, 22, 23. See Jo. xxi. 23. <sup>c</sup> Ver. 5; Gal. v. 1, 2. So Phil. iii. 2; Col. ii. 11. <sup>d</sup> See Lev. xii. 3. <sup>e</sup> Ver. 7; ch. xxviii. 29 (Gk.). <sup>f</sup> Gal. ii. 17. <sup>g</sup> See Lu. ii. 4. <sup>h</sup> Vers. 4, 6, 22, 23. See ch. xi. 30. <sup>i</sup> Ch. xx. 38 (Gk.). xxi. 5; Rom. xv. 24; 1 Cor. xvi. 6, 11; 2 Cor. i. 16; Tit. iii. 13 (Gk.); 3 Jo. 6 (Gk.). So ch. xvii. 15. <sup>j</sup> See ch. xi. 19. <sup>k</sup> See ch. i. 8. <sup>l</sup> So ch. xiv. 27; ver. 12.

<sup>1</sup> Phœnicia

come to Jerusalem, they were <sup>2</sup>received of the church, and of the apostles and <sup>3</sup>elders, and they <sup>4</sup>declared <sup>5</sup>all *things* that God had done with them. But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, <sup>6</sup>That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command *them* to keep the law of Moses.

- 6 And the apostles and <sup>7</sup>elders came together <sup>8</sup>for to consider of this matter. And when there had been much <sup>9</sup>disputing, Peter rose up, and said unto them, Men *and* <sup>10</sup>brethren, ye know how that <sup>11</sup>a good while <sup>12</sup>ago God made choice among us, <sup>13</sup>that the Gentiles by my mouth should hear the word of the gospel, and believe. And God, <sup>14</sup>which knoweth the hearts, <sup>15</sup>bare them witness, <sup>16</sup>giving them the Holy Ghost, <sup>17</sup>even as *he did* unto us; And <sup>18</sup>put no difference between us and them, <sup>19</sup>purifying their hearts <sup>20</sup>by faith. Now therefore why <sup>21</sup>tempt ye God, <sup>22</sup>to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that <sup>23</sup>through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ <sup>24</sup>*we* shall be saved, even as they. Then all the multitude kept silence, and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul, <sup>25</sup>declaring what <sup>26</sup>miracles and wonders <sup>27</sup>God had wrought among the Gentiles by them.
- 13 And after they had held their peace, <sup>14</sup>James answered, saying, Men *and* <sup>15</sup>brethren, hearken unto me: <sup>16</sup>Simeon <sup>17</sup>hath declared how God at the first <sup>18</sup>did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of <sup>19</sup>the prophets; as it is written: After this <sup>20</sup>I will return, and <sup>21</sup>will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: That the residue of men might <sup>22</sup>seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all <sup>23</sup>these *things*. Known unto God are all his works <sup>24</sup>from the beginning of the world. Wherefore <sup>25</sup>my sentence <sup>26</sup>is, that *we* trouble not them, which from among the Gentiles <sup>27</sup>are turned <sup>28</sup>to God: But that *we* write unto them, that *they* abstain from <sup>29</sup>pollutions <sup>30</sup>of idols, and *from* <sup>31</sup>fornication, and *from* <sup>32</sup>things strangled, and *from* <sup>33</sup>blood.
- 21 For Moses of old time <sup>34</sup>hath in every city them that preach him, <sup>35</sup>being read in the synagogues every sabbath day.

<sup>2</sup> they related

<sup>4</sup> omit 'Men and.'

<sup>6</sup> The older authorities, instead of 'among us,' read 'among you.'

<sup>7</sup> literally, 'the knower of hearts.'

<sup>9</sup> The older authorities omit 'Christ.'

<sup>11</sup> The older authorities omit 'all' before 'these things.'

<sup>12</sup> which were known from the beginning of the world; the older authorities omitting the words 'unto God are all his works.'

<sup>13</sup> my decision

<sup>14</sup> are turning to God

<sup>8</sup> were gathered together

<sup>10</sup> literally, 'from ancient days.'

<sup>12</sup> or 'the Holy Spirit.'

<sup>14</sup> After these things

<sup>16</sup> better, 'the pollutions.'

<sup>18</sup> literally, 'from ancient generations.'

<sup>22</sup> So ch. xxi.

<sup>23</sup> See

<sup>24</sup> Lu. viii. 40.

<sup>25</sup> Ch. xiv. 27

(Gk.). So

<sup>26</sup> vers. 3, 12;

<sup>27</sup> ch. xxi. 19.

<sup>28</sup> Ch. x. 20.

<sup>29</sup> xi. 12, 13.

<sup>30</sup> Cp. Gk. of

<sup>31</sup> ver. 21;

<sup>32</sup> ch. xxi. 16.

<sup>33</sup> Ch. i. 24.

<sup>34</sup> See i Sam.

<sup>35</sup> xvi. 7;

<sup>36</sup> Ch. xiv. 3

(Gk.).

<sup>37</sup> Ch. x. 44.

<sup>38</sup> See ch. x. 47.

<sup>39</sup> See ch. x. 35.

<sup>40</sup> Ps. li. 10;

<sup>41</sup> ch. x. 15, xi. 9;

<sup>42</sup> 2 Cor. vii. 1.

<sup>43</sup> So 1 Cor. i. 2;

<sup>44</sup> 1 Pet. i. 22.

<sup>45</sup> Cp. Jo. xiii.

<sup>46</sup> 10; Jas. i. 22.

<sup>47</sup> See ch. x. 43.

<sup>48</sup> Cp. ch. v. 9.

<sup>49</sup> So Gal. v. 1.

<sup>50</sup> See Mat.

<sup>51</sup> xxiii. 4.

<sup>52</sup> Cp. ver. 28;

<sup>53</sup> Heb. ix. 10.

<sup>54</sup> So Rom. iii.

<sup>55</sup> 24; Eph. ii.

<sup>56</sup> 5, 8; Tit. ii. 12.

<sup>57</sup> Ch. xxi. 19.

<sup>58</sup> So ver. 3.

<sup>59</sup> See Jo. iv. 48.

<sup>60</sup> Ch. xiv. 27;

<sup>61</sup> ver. 4.

<sup>62</sup> See ch. xii. 17.

<sup>63</sup> 2 Pet. i. 1 in

<sup>64</sup> the Gk.

<sup>65</sup> Ver. 7.

<sup>66</sup> See Lu. i. 68.

<sup>67</sup> See ch. xiii.

<sup>68</sup> 40.

<sup>69</sup> Cited from

<sup>70</sup> Amos ix. 11,

<sup>71</sup> 12.

<sup>72</sup> Cp. ch. xvii.

<sup>73</sup> 27.

<sup>74</sup> See Lu. i. 7.

<sup>75</sup> Cp. Isa. xlv.

<sup>76</sup> 21.

<sup>77</sup> Cp. ver. 28.

<sup>78</sup> Ch. xiv. 15,

<sup>79</sup> xxvi. 20;

<sup>80</sup> 1 Thes. i. 9.

<sup>81</sup> So ch. ix. 35.

<sup>82</sup> xi. 21.

<sup>83</sup> So Dan. i. 8;

<sup>84</sup> Mal. i. 7, 12.

<sup>85</sup> See ver. 29.

<sup>86</sup> Cp. Ps. cvi.

<sup>87</sup> 28; Ezek. iv.

<sup>88</sup> 13, 14.

<sup>89</sup> 1 Cor. x. 7, 8;

<sup>90</sup> 1 Pet. iv. 3, 4;

<sup>91</sup> Rev. ii. 14,

<sup>92</sup> 20. See

<sup>93</sup> 1 Cor. vi. 18.

<sup>94</sup> See Lev. iii.

<sup>95</sup> 17

<sup>96</sup> Ch. xiii. 15.

<sup>97</sup> See Lu. xvi.

<sup>98</sup> 29.

- 22 Then pleased it the apostles<sup>17</sup> and <sup>s</sup>elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company<sup>18</sup> to <sup>Antioch</sup> with Paul and Barnabas; *namely*, Judas surnamed <sup>Barnabas</sup>, and <sup>Silas</sup>, <sup>chief men</sup> among <sup>the brethren</sup>: And they wrote *letters* by them after this manner; The apostles and <sup>s</sup>elders and <sup>brethren</sup> <sup>send greeting</sup> unto the <sup>brethren</sup> which are of the Gentiles in <sup>Antioch</sup> and <sup>Syria</sup> and <sup>Cilicia</sup>:
- 23 Forasmuch as we have heard, that <sup>certain</sup> which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, *Ye must* be circumcised, and keep the law<sup>20</sup>: to whom
- 24 we gave no *such*<sup>21</sup> commandment: <sup>It seemed good</sup> unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men<sup>22</sup> unto
- 25 you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, Men <sup>that have hazarded their lives</sup> for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- 26 We have sent therefore <sup>Judas and Silas</sup>, who<sup>23</sup> shall also tell *you* the same *things* by mouth. For <sup>it seemed good</sup> to the Holy Ghost,<sup>24</sup> and to us, <sup>to lay upon you</sup> no greater burden
- 27 than these necessary *things*; That *ye* abstain from <sup>meats</sup> offered to idols, and from <sup>blood</sup>, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well. <sup>Fare ye well</sup>.
- 28 So when they were dismissed, they came<sup>25</sup> to <sup>Antioch</sup>: and when they had gathered the multitude together, they delivered
- 29 the epistle: *Which* when they had read, they rejoiced for the consolation.<sup>26</sup> And <sup>Judas and Silas</sup>, being <sup>prophets</sup> also themselves, <sup>exhorted the brethren</sup> with many words, and
- 30 <sup>confirmed them</sup>. And after they had tarried *there* a space,<sup>27</sup> they were let go<sup>28</sup> <sup>in peace</sup> from the brethren unto the
- 31 apostles.<sup>29</sup> Notwithstanding it pleased <sup>Silas</sup> to abide there *still*.<sup>30</sup> <sup>Paul also and Barnabas</sup> continued in <sup>Antioch</sup>, teaching and <sup>preaching</sup> the word of the Lord, with many others also.
- 32 And some days after Paul said unto Barnabas, Let us go again and visit our<sup>31</sup> brethren <sup>in every city</sup> where we have

**17** Then it seemed good to the apostles

<sup>18</sup> The translation here should be, 'having chosen men out from themselves to send.'

<sup>19</sup> *The older authorities omitting 'and' before 'brethren,' the translation must run, 'and the brethren being elders.'*

<sup>30</sup> *The older authorities omit the words, 'saying ye must be circumcised and keep the law.'* <sup>31</sup> *omit 'such' before 'commandment.'*

<sup>22</sup> *render* 'having chosen men out to send.'

<sup>28</sup> *insert 'themselves' before 'shall also.'* <sup>24</sup> *or 'Holy Spirit.'*

<sup>25</sup> *Some of the older authorities read 'came down to.'*

<sup>26</sup> better rendered 'exhortation.'      <sup>27</sup> for a time      <sup>28</sup> they were sent away

<sup>29</sup> Instead of 'to the apostles,' the older authorities read, 'to those that sent them forth.'

<sup>30</sup> *The older authorities omit the words, 'notwithstanding it pleased Silas to abide there still.'*

<sup>81</sup> *The older authorities omit 'our' before 'brethren'; render 'the brethren.'*

37 preached the word of the Lord, *and see how they do.* And Barnabas determined to take with *them* <sup>f</sup> John, whose surname <sup>f Ver. 39. See ch. xii. 12.</sup> was Mark.<sup>32</sup> But Paul thought not good to take him with *them*,<sup>33</sup> who departed from them from Pamphylia, and went not 39 with them to the work. And the contention was so sharp <sup>32</sup> *between them*,<sup>34</sup> that they departed asunder one from the other: 40 and so <sup>v</sup> Barnabas took <sup>f</sup> Mark, and sailed unto <sup>w</sup> Cyprus; And <sup>r</sup> Paul chose <sup>s</sup> Silas, and departed, being <sup>r</sup> recommended by the <sup>y</sup> brethren unto <sup>a</sup> the grace of God.<sup>35</sup> And he went through 41 <sup>a</sup> Syria and Cilicia, <sup>b</sup> confirming the churches. <sup>43. a Ver. 23. b Ver. 32. So ch. xvi. 5.</sup>

<sup>32</sup> *literally*, 'who was called Mark.'

<sup>33</sup> *literally*, 'and there arose a sharp dispute, so that,' *etc.*

<sup>34</sup> *omit* 'between them.'

<sup>35</sup> *The older authorities, instead of 'the grace of God,' read 'the grace of the Lord.'*

*The Circumcision Difficulty, and the First Council of the Church, 1-36.*

Ver. 1. And certain men which came down from Judea taught the brethren. The general aspects of this famous controversy are discussed in Excursus A, at the end of the chapter. The 'certain men' are alluded to by St. Paul in the Galatian Epistle, ii. 4, in the following terms:— 'False brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage.' They were probably, for the most part, Pharisees of an extreme sect who had embraced the gospel. Epiphanius and other early writers tell us that the leader of these men was Cerinthus, who excited the believers against Peter when he baptized the Roman centurion (see Acts xi. 2, 3).

Which came down from Judea. This party, which maintained that the Mosaic ceremonial was binding upon all Gentile as well as Jewish Christians, naturally had their headquarters in Jerusalem. In the ancient Hebrew capital it was difficult to separate the Church from the temple. We find most of the Christian leaders, who first taught that the Gentiles were free from the yoke of the Mosaic law, made Antioch, and later Ephesus and Alexandria, their residence.

Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved. These Jewish teachers proclaimed a certain doctrine in a distinct and formal manner; they did not confine themselves to the expression of certain scruples; they asserted positively that Gentile Christians could not possibly be saved unless they submitted to the various rules and ordinances of the Mosaic law, of which circumcision was the initial ceremony, thus denying the sufficiency of faith in Christ as the condition of pardon and reconciliation. But the hearts of the Antioch teachers were deeply penetrated by the great truth that 'we are saved not by the law but by grace.'

Ver. 2. No small dissension and disputation with them. It has been suggested that not improbably these Judaizing teachers succeeded in persuading certain of the Antioch Christians to adopt at least some of their views; for, at a later period, after the Jerusalem decision by

the apostles, we find the same question again agitating the Antioch believers, and even seriously affecting the policy of such men as Peter and Barnabas (see Gal. ii. 11-13).

They determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem. In Gal. ii., where Paul gives his own account of this momentous journey to Jerusalem, he says he went up 'by revelation.' Such an intimation of the Divine will at a crisis like this, in the first days of the faith, is what we should expect. On several occasions of Paul's life a Divine revelation was vouchsafed to him,—on the Damascus journey (Acts ix.); again, when he was about to carry the gospel from Asia into Europe (Acts xvi. 9); in the temple of Jerusalem, when he received the commandment to preach to the Gentile world (Acts xxii. 18); when the ship in which he was being conveyed a prisoner to Rome was sinking in the tempest (Acts xxvii. 23; see also 2 Cor. xii. 1-9). In the midst of the confusion excited in the Church of Antioch by the teaching of the extreme party at Jerusalem, we may well suppose that the Divine voice came to Paul, instructing him to propose the mission to Jerusalem, still the residence of several, if not of all, the surviving apostles, and for that reason, as well as for its own sacred associations, regarded with deep reverence and veneration by the other churches.

Ver. 3. And being brought on their way by the church. That is, attended by some of the leading members of the Antioch congregation, as a mark of honour and respect. This notice was inserted, no doubt, to show that the majority, at least, of the Christians in Antioch were opposed to the Jewish interpretation of the law, and held with the broader teaching of such men as Barnabas and Paul. The mention of the great joy caused to the brethren of Phenice and Samaria by the recital of the Gentile conversions is also inserted by the writer of the 'Acts,' to show that the general sympathy was on the side of those who urged Gentile freedom.

Ver. 4. And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church, and of the apostles and elders. The word translated here 'were received,' implies a cordial reception



on the part of the apostles and elders of the Jerusalem community, who welcomed with affection Barnabas and Paul as the great missionaries of the faith.

**Ver. 5. But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees.** Some of these Pharisees must have been the companions of Paul years ago, when he studied the law under Gamaliel, and their animosity *now* was doubtless strengthened against the great Gentile missionary, when they remembered what he was *then*,—when they called to mind how, in those old days, he promised to be their future leader in the restoration of Judaism; and after all that had happened since, when both they and he had found in Jesus the long-promised Messiah, while *they* were only longing to raise and spiritualize the ancient religion and rites of Israel, *he*, on the other hand, was giving his life-work to show that the work and office of the chosen people was a thing of the past,—was labouring to merge the Church of Israel in the Church of the world,—was using all his vast learning and powers to prove that the found and cherished Messiah belonged to the Isles of the Gentiles as much as He did to the Holy Land of Promise,—that henceforth there must be no distinction between Jew and Gentile, but that both were equally sharers in the eternal promise, whether or no they kept the sacred law of Moses.

**It was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses.** Even Jewish opinion was divided on the question, 'how far the law was binding upon Gentile proselytes to Judaism.' One school, and that a very influential one, maintained that circumcision was a rite that under no circumstances might be dispensed with. These rigid and uncompromising Jews were opposed to any overtures being made to Gentiles, and generally discouraged any proselytism. The famous teacher Schammai, it is said, drove any Gentile converts who might present themselves from his house. Another and more liberal school of thought endeavoured to make the way easy for proselytes to Judaism. These striking differences in the great Jewish schools at this period are well shown in Josephus (*Ant.* xx. 2), when, in the story of the conversion to Judaism of Izates King of Adiabene, the king's teacher Ananias instructed him 'that he might become a Jew without submitting to circumcision, and that if he worshipped God he performed the really important duty of the law'; but another strict and zealous doctor, Eleazar, the same history tells us, said to King Izates, 'How long wilt thou continue uncircumcised? hast thou not read what the law says concerning circumcision? art thou not aware of how great impiety thou art guilty by neglecting it?' Another well-known saying of that stern and exclusive school was, 'that all the uncircumcised went to hell'; and another saying asserted 'that no uncircumcised would rise at the last day.'

Rabbi Hillel, on the other hand, threw the weight of his great influence into the counsels of the more moderate Jews. 'Love all men,' once said this famous rabbi, 'and bring all men into fellowship with the law; do not do to another what thou wouldst be unwilling should be done to thee. This is the whole law; everything else is only a comment on it.' The teaching of Philo, in another celebrated centre of Jewish thought (Alexandria), was distinctly in favour of winning the stranger Gentile to Judaism, and of relaxing in his favour

the more oppressive and burthensome requirements of the law.

**Ver. 6. And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter.** Some seventeen or eighteen years had passed since the ascension of Jesus. Of the twelve apostles, one we know had gone through martyrdom to his rest; others were perhaps in distant parts; and round those who still remained in the old Jerusalem home, gradually had gathered a company of presbyters or elders, who shared their responsibilities and took part in their deliberations. In this first authoritative Council of the Church, most of the more distinguished and best known teachers of early Christianity took part. Peter, the leader of the little Church of the first days; and John, the friend of Christ, who probably survived all his brother apostles, and lived to give the sanction of his vast experience to the more elaborate church organization we find firmly established in the next century; James, the so-called brother of the Lord, the chief of the ascetic party in the early Church, the honoured representative of what may be termed the Jewish-Christian section; Paul and Barnabas, the great advocates for a broad Gentile Church, liberated from all Jewish restraints, and rites, and customs; Titus, the famous pupil of Paul, and afterwards his appointed successor in the chief government of the Cretan churches; Silas, another of Paul's trusted counsellors; and Judas,—these, we know, were present, and took part with many other men, some known, some unknown, in these first public deliberations concerning the principles which for the future were to guide the rulers of the various churches rapidly springing up in the provinces of the vast Roman empire, and even in the still more distant and partially unknown East.

**Ver. 7. And when there had been much disputing.** 'Questioning' or 'debating' would better represent the Greek word translated 'disputing.' It can easily be conceived that the mixed assembly contained many earnest advocates, both of the old Jewish party, and of what may be termed the new Gentile school of Christians. These had each their arguments to urge. The older apostles, Peter and John, supported by the powerful influence of James, well known and honoured by the most rigorous Hebrew Christians, with great moderation and wisdom arranged a common platform, on which the extreme men of both parties might act in unison, and together carry on the weighty work of their Divine Master.

**Peter rose up, and said unto them.** Only those speeches are reported which closed the debate, and which evidently expressed the general feeling of the majority of the Council. Peter's words, of course, were exceedingly weighty, as the deliberate expression of opinion of one who had ever stood high in the Master's friendship and confidence, and who, from the very first, had occupied a leading position among the brethren. There is no doubt that the burning ardour of Paul, and his marked success in the work, had influenced in no small degree the warm-hearted and enthusiastic Peter. It must have been a great effort for the older apostle, bound by so many Hebrew prejudices, to have pleaded so warmly, so generously, for Gentile freedom.

The noble self-denial which Peter showed, the brave and independent position which he took on



this momentous occasion, and which probably cost him much of his influence among the stricter Jewish Christians, must be reckoned among the famous apostle's chiefest titles to honour.

**A good while ago.** Better rendered 'from ancient days.' Peter's reminder was a grave rebuke to the extreme Pharisee party, who probably had forgotten the case of Cornelius, referred to by the apostle, which had taken place some eight or ten years before.

**Ver. 8. And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us.** The Eternal, before whom the secrets of all hearts are open, was able to judge of the sincerity of these Gentiles. He testified that these hitherto despised strangers were acceptable in His sight by giving them the Holy Ghost, just as He had done to the Jews who had turned and believed in Jesus.

**Ver. 9. And put no difference between us and them.** He no longer made any distinction between the Pagans who were converted and believed in the Lord Jesus, and the believing Israelite, after He had once purified their hearts by faith. The words here plainly allude to the case of the conversion of Cornelius (Acts x. 15): 'What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common.'

**Purifying their hearts by faith.** The Jews generally, whom Peter was addressing, held that the heathen were unclean so long as they were uncircumcised; but Peter showed them that God, by bestowing His glorious blessing upon *uncircumcised* believing Gentiles as fully and freely as He had done upon *circumcised* believing Jews, had ruled that *faith* was the true circumcision, the only real means of purification. 'Through faith we obtain another, a new and clean heart, and God regards us, for the sake of Christ our Mediator, as altogether righteous and holy' (*Articles of Smalcald*).

**Ver. 10. Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples?** To impose new obligations upon these Gentile churches founded by Paul and Barnabas would be nothing else than tempting or trying God by demanding new proofs of His will,—God, who in the case of the uncircumcised Cornelius had clearly signified His intention that the Gentiles who believed should be partakers with the Jews of all the blessings which, through the Redeemer, flowed into the Church. *Now* to determine that these Gentile believers must, before they could be admitted into the Church, submit to the burdensome Mosaic law, would be to throw a doubt upon God's former decision, and the miraculous signs which accompanied it as the seal of Divine approval; which miraculous signs had again, in no small measure, been repeated during the Gentile mission of Barnabas and Paul.

**Which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear.** These words do not refer to circumcision only, but to the whole Mosaic law viewed as a condition of salvation—an insupportable burden. Peter's words here are not a complaint against God as a severe Master, but are a touching confession of man's weakness. His appeal here has been well paraphrased: 'Men and brethren, speak the truth, and candidly tell me, have *you* kept the law?' 'When oxen,' wrote Luther, 'have long borne the yoke, and dragged heavy weights, all that they earn by their work beyond their daily food is to be struck on the head and be

butchered: such is the experience of those who hope to be justified by the law. They are taken captive and burdened by a heavy yoke, and then, after they have long and painfully laboured to do the works of the law, all that they finally earn is to remain eternally poor and wretched servants.'

**Ver. 11. But we believe that, through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, we shall be saved, even as they.** The believing Jew, who has tried to keep the law and failed, will be saved like the Gentile through the power of the blood of Jesus. 'Their ground of trust is the same as *ours*, *ours* as *theirs*' (Alford; and see Gal. ii. 15 and following verses, where this train of thought is more fully carried out by St. Paul).

**Ver. 12. Then all the multitude kept silence, and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul.** The weighty words of Peter produced a marked effect upon the Council; his plain, simple recital disposed even the extreme Jewish party to listen with attention, if not with favour, to the case of the Gentile apostles, who now proceeded to declare how God had blessed their work with the same miraculous signs of His favour as He had done when Peter received the centurion Cornelius into the Church of Christ.

**Ver. 13. And after they had held their peace, James answered.** The discussion was closed by a very famous character in the early Church. James, the so-called brother of the Lord (see Gal. i. 19 and ii. 9), and the writer of the New Testament epistle which bears his name, who is generally supposed to have presided over this early Council, occupied a peculiar position of authority among the Jerusalem Christians. His history was a strange one. During the Lord's earthly life, James, with the rest of 'His brethren,' seems to have been a disbeliever in His mission. He was converted by that appearance of the Risen One specially related by Paul (1 Cor. xv. 7),—'After that He was seen of James.' At a comparatively early period of the Church's history he appears to have been selected as the resident head of the Jerusalem community. He possessed two qualifications which marked him out for this peculiar distinction,—his relationship after the flesh to the risen Jesus, and his faithful observance of the Mosaic law and ordinances, to which he seems to have added a rigorous asceticism. Hegesippus (in Eusebius, *H. E.* ii. 23) tells us 'he was holy from his mother's womb; he drank no wine nor strong drink, neither did he eat flesh; no razor ever touched his head, he did not anoint himself with oil, he did not use the bath; he alone was allowed to enter into the holy place, for he wore no wool, but only fine linen; and he would enter into the temple alone, and be found there kneeling on his knees and asking forgiveness for the people.' This traditionary account, although very ancient, must be accepted with considerable reservation. Still, his surname of the 'just' or 'righteous,' by which name he was generally known in the records of the early Church, is a witness that he was, if not the stern ascetic of the tradition above quoted, at least a rigid observer of the Mosaic ritual and law. It has been happily remarked by Dr. Schaff (*History of the Apostolic Church*, vol. i. book 1), that 'the influence of James was altogether necessary. He, if any, could gain the ancient chosen nation in a body. God placed such a representative of the purest form of Old Testament piety in the midst of the Jews to make their transition to the faith of

the Messiah as easy as possible, even at the eleventh hour. But when they refused to hear this last messenger of peace, the Divine forbearance was exhausted, and the fearful, long-threatened judgment broke upon them. He was not to outlive the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple. Shortly before it (according to Hegesippus), in the year 69, after having borne powerful testimony to the Messiahship of Jesus, he was thrown down from the pinnacle of the temple and stoned by the Pharisees. His last words were, "I beg of Thee, Lord God Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." He was buried by the temple. Eusebius and also Josephus speak of the siege and destruction of Jerusalem being looked upon by many of the Jews as a punishment for what they had done to James the just.

**Saying, Men and brethren, hearken unto me.** In bringing the discussion to a close, James pointed out that Simon Peter had related how, years before, God had signified His good pleasure in regard to the Gentiles,—“Out of these, too, would a people be chosen;” and this determination of the Most High agreed with the words of the prophets—as, for instance, with the closing sayings of Amos, who wrote of the ultimate calling home of the Gentiles. As neither the ancient prophets nor the more recent declarations of the will of God—while plainly announcing this admission of many Gentiles into the pale which enclosed God’s people—said anything respecting the duty of observing the Mosaic rites and ceremonies, his view, as president of the Council, was: that these strangers ought not to be troubled with these burdens; only, for love’s sake not to offend too deeply the tender consciences of scrupulous Jews, with whom they would frequently come in contact, and at the same time to give them a general rule of life which would preserve them from the worst pollutions of the Pagan world around them, he recommended a very few general restrictive rules of life, which these Gentiles might honestly observe without breaking off or even endangering their relations with the world in which they lived and worked.

**Ver. 14. Simeon hath declared.** James at the commencement of his speech uses this Jewish form of the name Simon, the original name of Peter. Simon seems to have been familiar to the Church of Jerusalem (see St. Luke xxiv. 34). In this use of the Jewish term by which Peter was known, James identifies himself with the customs of the Hebrews—those many thousands of the Jews who believed and were zealous of the law (Acts xxi. 20). This is the last mention of Simon Peter in the Acts of the Apostles.

**Ver. 15. And to this agree the words of the prophets.** After referring here to the *work of God* instanced by Peter, James now shows how completely the *word of God* in the writings of the prophets agreed with this *work*. The signs and wonders which accompanied the conversion of Cornelius, and subsequently crowned the missionary labours of Paul and Barnabas, were only the Divine seal of a great work long ago foreshadowed in the Hebrew prophecies.

**Ver. 16. I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down.** This Amos prophecy speaks first of the fall of the Jewish Church, and the abolition of its temple service; it next conveys the promise that God will build a new church on the ruins of the old, and gather together in it all the Gentiles. It lastly sets forth

that this church shall receive salvation only through the name of the Lord, which should be called upon by it, *i.e.* on which it would believe. Wordsworth remarks here that Amos declares in these words ‘that the true restoration of the tabernacle of David is to be found in the reception of the residue of the human family, and in the flowing in of all nations, whether Jew or Gentile, into the Church of Christ; and asks, “Is not this a Divine declaration on the true restoration of the Jews?”’

**Ver. 17. That the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called, saith the Lord, who doeth all these things.** The quotation from Amos ix. 11, 12, contained in vers. 16, 17, is made freely from the Septuagint, which differs here considerably from the Hebrew text as we now possess it. The main difference is in the quotation contained in ver. 17, where, instead of the words, ‘that the remnant of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles upon whom my name is called,’ the Hebrew text has, ‘that they might possess the remnant of Edom, and of all the Gentiles that are called by my name.’ The LXX. here, as not unfrequently, give a paraphrase rather than a literal translation of the original, and regard ‘Edom’ (a common Rabbinical idea) as a general representative of those who were strangers to the God of Israel. No doubt the LXX. version was quoted by James on account of the many foreign Jews present at the Council; these would be familiar with the Greek Scriptures, not with the original Hebrew.

The grand words which closed the prophecy of Amos were here cited by James as foretelling the future calling of the Gentiles, and at the same time as containing *no recognition of circumcision as a permanent rule*, no mention of other Jewish ceremonies as binding upon these multitudes of redeemed strangers; indeed, in the various and repeated intimations by the Hebrew prophets that King Messiah should arise in coming days, and should gather into one fold Gentile as well as Jew, the Mosaic ceremonial law is completely ignored.

**Ver. 18. Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.** There are many variations of the Greek text here, but they all yield much the same meaning. On the whole, the translation of the best supported reading is—ver. 17, ‘Saith the Lord, who doeth these things,’ ver. 18, ‘which were known from the beginning of the world;’ in other words, James says, ‘What we now propose to sanction, namely, the extending the gospel summons to the heathen world without imposing upon them the hard yoke and burden of the Mosaic rites and ceremonial law,’ God has *from the very beginning* known. It is no unexpected event; it is simply carrying into effect an eternal decree of the ever blessed Trinity.

**Ver. 19. Wherefore my sentence is.** Better rendered, ‘My decision,’—that is, ‘I for my part decide we ought not to burden them,’ etc. There is no authoritative judgment here on the part of James. It is simply a weighty opinion of the presiding elder; an opinion which, coinciding with the already expressed judgment of Peter in favour of the Gentile mission, was finally adopted by the majority of the Council, and taken as the basis of their official decree.

**That we trouble not them, viz. by imposing upon these foreign converts burdensome rites and**

ceremonies, which would effectually separate them from the peoples among whom they live, and would render impossible the ordinary life either in the city or country.

Ver. 20. **But that we write unto them, that they abstain from pollutions of idols, etc.** On the full meaning of the famous injunctions embodied in the decree of the Council, see Excursus at the end of the chapter, where they are discussed at length.

Ver. 21. **For Moses of old time hath in every city them that preach him.** This is no figure of speech, but a simple expression of what was actually the case at that time in the Roman empire. There were colonies of Jews in all important cities in the East and West, and in each of these, one or more synagogues existed, where every Sabbath-day the law of Moses was read. In addition, then, to the graver reasons (see the Excursus above referred to) which rendered the decrees of the Council so needful to secure a higher moral life among the followers of Jesus living among the dissolute subjects of the empire, this verse assigns another plea for their enforcement. The Jewish Christian, constantly hearing the things specified in the decree, forbidden in the Mosaic law read by them so reverently every Sabbath-day, would be bitterly offended if their fellow-believers indulged in things they were so sternly warned against. The fathers of the Council hoped that if the Gentile Christians carefully abstained from acts which the Jews regarded as causing pollution, gradually the Christian church and the Christian synagogue, both acknowledging the same Messiah, both living in the same glorious hopes, would forget the old differences of origin, and in the end would form one fold under one Shepherd, Jesus Christ.

Ver. 22. **Then pleased it the apostles and elders, with the whole church.** Or better translated, 'Then it seemed good to the apostles,' etc. The Greek word *δοξα*, rendered 'it seemed good,' is frequently used in classic Greek in the formal resolutions of any popular assembly, and hence the decrees of any such assembly are termed *δῶματα*, whence our word 'dogma.' The decrees of this primitive Council were agreed to by the united voice of the whole Church. The decree, however, ran in the name of the apostle and elder brethren only; see the note on the reading of the older Greek MSS. in the next verse (23).

**To send chosen men.** There is a slight irregularity in the cases of the participle here in the original Greek (see amended translation).

**Judas surnamed Barsabas.** Some have supposed this envoy of the Jerusalem Church was a brother of that Joseph-Barsabas who, with Matthias, had been proposed as a candidate for the apostleship (Acts i. 23), both being presumably sons of one Nabas (*bar* being the Hebrew for son). Nothing, however, is definitely known concerning him, except that in the early Church he held the rank of 'a prophet' (see note on ver. 32); not necessarily merely a foreteller of future events, but one especially gifted with the power of preaching. Judas was esteemed one of the chief men among the brethren.

**Silas.** Well known in after years as the fellow-missionary and friend of St. Paul (1 Thess. i. 1; 2 Cor. i. 19). It is not improbable that he was identical with that Silvanus by whom the First Epistle of St. Peter was carried to the churches of Asia. Tradition speaks of him as subsequently bishop of Corinth.

**Chief men among the brethren.** They were certainly among the chief men of the Jerusalem community, and their selection indicates an especial wish on the part of the Christian governing body at Jerusalem to show honour to the Antioch Church and the increasing Gentile communions.

Ver. 23. **And they wrote letters by them after this manner.** The word 'letters,' printed in the English version in italics, is superfluous; it does not appear in the original Greek. There was only one official document sent round, a faithful transcript of which St. Luke has no doubt given us.

**The apostles and elders and brethren.** An important variation in the text of the original Greek occurs here. The older MSS., with the exception of Codex E. (Laudianus), omit *καὶ ἐλδοι*, 'and,' before the word 'brethren'; the verse, then, must be read thus: 'The apostles and the elder brethren,' or: 'The brethren which are elders, sent to the brethren, etc. . . . greeting.' Upon this reading of the older MSS. Wordsworth remarks: '(1) Paul and Barnabas are said to go up to the *apostles and elders* at Jerusalem concerning this question, xv. 2. (2) The *apostles and elders* are said to have met together to consider this matter, xv. 6. (3) Paul is said to have gone through the cities, delivering to them to keep the decrees determined by the *apostles and elders* at Jerusalem, xvi. 4. This triple mention of *apostles and elders*, without the addition of any other party, is significant. It seems to indicate that the *apostles and elders* constituted the Council, as far as the deliberative voice and definitive sentence were concerned; and therefore the decree was promulgated in their names.'

**Unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia.** This geographical notice of the peoples mentioned specially in the decree of the Council gives us some idea how widely the preaching of Paul and his companions had extended, and how great had been the harvest of the Lord already in those early days. The mention of Syria here gives us an insight into the activity of the missionary enterprise of the Antioch Christians. Successful missions had been carried on through that great and rich province, of which we have no record in the 'Acts,'—missions, doubtless, conducted by men of the school of Paul and Barnabas; in Cilicia, too, the native country of Paul, congregations of believers in the Crucified had sprung up, and apparently were already flourishing communities.

Ver. 24. **Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls.** These zealots for the old law and the Jewish rites came evidently from Jerusalem, the headquarters of the new faith, and had given out that they were commissioned by the leaders of the Church there. Now the assembled Council, in their authoritative decree which they sent round, openly disavowed these disturbers of the Gentile churches.

**Saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law.** These words are omitted in most of the older MSS. They are doubtless an interpolation by some early scribe, who desired to specify in detail the points especially selected by these Jerusalem Jews in their endeavour to unsettle the minds of these Gentile Christians. They are taken, of course, from ver. 5 of this chapter; their omission, however, in no way detracts from the force of the present passage.

Ver. 25. *To send chosen men unto you.* The Greek words should be translated here as in verse 22. In some of the older authorities here, the irregularity in the cases of the participles above noticed does not appear.

*Our beloved Barnabas and Paul.* Commentators remark here on the unusual order of the names of the two apostles, Barnabas standing first. It is an indirect testimony to the scrupulous accuracy of the writer of the Acts; Barnabas in this official letter standing before Paul, because Paul had spent but little time in Jerusalem, whilst Barnabas among the Christians there had long been a known and honoured leader.

Ver. 26. *Men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.* It is well said by Wordsworth, that 'the first Christians were not wont to praise each other in public, but that on the present occasion such a witness, especially to St. Paul, was seasonable and appropriate. It was a reply to the charges of the judges against him; it was a public declaration on the part of the other apostles at Jerusalem, that St. Paul's claims to Divine revelations and to an apostolic mission were true, and that there was no difference of opinion or disparity in dignity between him and the Twelve who had seen the Lord on earth.' These noble men were martyrs *in will* though their lives had not yet been laid down; they were well carrying out the command, which has been well and tersely expressed, 'Die at the post of duty, but gain souls for the Lamb.'

Ver. 27. *We have sent therefore Judas and Silas.* These two well-known men, held in high honour by the Church, were to testify to the genuineness of the letter; by this means the Antioch Christians would have oral as well as written testimony. 'These notable envoys,' Stier says, 'would certify that the letter had actually proceeded from a unanimous resolve of the Church at Jerusalem, and that Barnabas and Saul were thus honoured and beloved there; they would give fuller information respecting the decrees, and answer every inquiry that might be made, as living epistles confirmed by the letter, and confirming it in return; and thus by their word they should restore again the harmony which those ungent members of their Church had disturbed.'

Ver. 28. *For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us.* To us inspired by the Holy Ghost, to us His ministers and organs for declaring the truth—a mode of expression not uncommon in the Old Testament, where we read: 'The people believed the Lord and His servant Moses,' Ex. xiv. 31; 'The sword of the Lord and of Gideon,' Judg. vii. 18–20; 'The people feared the Lord and Samuel,' 1 Sam. xii. 18. This expression, 'It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us,' is 'an apostolic statement of the true doctrine of inspiration. The apostles were inspired by God, but they did not lose their personal identity. The human element was not absorbed into the Divine, but it was spiritualized and transfigured by it' (Wordsworth).

'The decrees of the Council of Jerusalem were not, as the canons of other ecclesiastical assemblies, human, but very divine ordinances; for which cause the churches were far and wide commanded everywhere to see them kept no otherwise than if Christ Himself had personally on earth been the author of them.

'The cause why that Council was of so great

authority and credit above all others which have been held since then, is expressed in those words, "*Unto the Holy Ghost and to us it hath seemed good.*" . . . Wherefore, inasmuch as the Council of Jerusalem did chance to consist of men so enlightened, it had authority greater than were meet for any other council besides to challenge, wherein no such persons are' (Hooker, *Ecc. Polity*, Book viii. chap. vi.).

Ver. 29. *That ye abstain from meats offered to idols.* The articles in the letter of the Council are identical with the points mentioned by James in his speech. They are discussed in the Excursus.

*Fare ye well.* The Greek word rendered 'fare ye well' is equivalent to the Latin 'valete.' It was the customary conclusion to letters among the Greeks. See the *epistle* of Claudius Lysias to Festus, Acts xxiii. 30.

Ver. 30. *So when they were dismissed.* These words probably imply a formal and solemn leave-taking on the part of the Jerusalem Church, accompanied with certain religious services.

Ver. 31. *Which when they had read, they rejoiced for the consolation.* The consolation over which they rejoiced was not merely that a dispute which threatened such grave consequences was so happily terminated, but because the Church in council had ruled that the Gentiles, if they accepted Christianity, were not to be subjected to the painful yoke of the Mosaic ritual and ordinances. To those far-sighted men who hoped for a world-wide Church, the decree removed a bar which must effectually have hindered any advance on the part of the Church of Christ beyond the lines of Judaism.

Ver. 32. *Judas and Silas being prophets.* In the Church of the first days existed a certain number of men known as 'prophets.' We hear of them, by chance it seems, but still frequently, in the varied writings of the New Testament. It seems in that age, when the foundation-stones of the mighty temple of Christianity were being laid in so many lands, that hundreds, it may possibly have been thousands of inspired men were helping forward the Master's work, and yet of most of these all record has disappeared. 'Their voices smote the air, and did their work, and died away, and we catch but the faintest echoes of them. Their words were written on the sand, and the advancing waves of time have washed away all or nearly all the traces of what was once as awful as the handwriting on the wall' (Plumptre).

What now do we know of this strange gift of prophecy, so soon taken away from men? It was no mere power of foretelling future events; the chief characteristic feature of these prophets of early Christianity was that the prophets possessed a strange, winning power of words, which had a weighty effect on their hearers. They were, then, *earnest, impassioned preachers*, who possessed a supernatural insight into the hearts of men; they seemed to know what was in their minds, they read their most secret thoughts (1 Cor. xiv. 24, 25). With these mighty gifts they also were endowed in many cases with a power of foretelling future events (see Acts xi. 27–30, xxi. 4, 10 and 11, xx. 23); but from the general tenor of the New Testament writings, this prophetic gift was apparently little exercised by these servants of the Lord. Among the influences at work in those first years of care and anxiety, when Christianity, struggling against the opposition of the whole world, still advanced and ever advanced

with strange, resistless power, unaided by any human help, must be reckoned the Divine gift of prophecy in this extended sense; but few details of this power have been preserved, hardly any record of its use. Scattered notices only remain to tell us how numerous in the first days were those gifted men known as 'prophets in the Church,' and how constantly they made use of the 'talent' entrusted to them; but for us it is in fact a lost page in the history of the Apostolic Church. (For a more elaborate discussion on this interesting question, see Professor Plumptre's essay, in his *Biblical Studies*, on the prophets of the New Testament; and on the whole question of prophesying, Dean Stanley, Lectures XIX. XX., *On the Jewish Church*.) ●

Ver. 33. **They were let go in peace.** Better rendered, 'They were dismissed with peace;' that is, once more, in a solemn meeting, the Antioch brethren took leave of the Jerusalem envoys with prayer and 'with peace,' the formula customary at parting (see Mark v. 34; Luke vii. 50, viii. 48; Acts xvi. 36). Judas and Silas both returned to Jerusalem to give account of their mission at Antioch, and Silas returned soon to Antioch to be with Paul; won over, no doubt, to a deep admiration of the single-hearted apostle by his earnestness and fervour, this prophet of the old mother Church attached himself henceforth to the fortunes of Paul.

Ver. 34. **Notwithstanding it pleased Silas to abide there still.** This verse is wanting in the older MSS., and in many of the chief versions. It is evidently a marginal gloss, originally inserted to explain how Silas, notwithstanding the statement of ver. 33, was at hand (ver. 40) conveniently for Paul to choose him as companion in travel.

Ver. 35. **Paul also and Barnabas continued in Antioch, teaching and preaching the word of the Lord.** During this residence of Paul in the Syrian metropolis the dispute took place between Paul and Peter related in the Galatian letter, ii. 11-16. This is not told here. The writer of the 'Acts' did not omit this episode because he wished to pass over in silence this grave difference of opinion between the two great Christian leaders; the purpose of this early church history was not to record the principal events in the lives of either Peter or Paul, but simply to tell the story of the foundation of the Christian Church, and how in the first thirty years the doctrines of Jesus were carried by the first missionary preachers from Jerusalem to Antioch, and from Antioch to Rome. The dispute in question was followed by no important consequences. The sorrowful incident is thus graphically related (in the *Life of Paul*, Conybeare and Howson, chap. vii.): 'At this time certain Jewish brethren came "from James," who presided over the Church at Jerusalem. Whether they were really sent on some mission by the Apostle James, or we are merely to understand that they came from Jerusalem, they brought with them their old Hebrew repugnance against social intercourse with the uncircumcised; and Peter in their society began to vacillate. In weak compliance with their prejudices, he "withdrew and separated himself" from those whom he had lately treated as brethren and equals in Christ. Just as in an earlier part of his life he had first asserted his readiness to follow his Master to death, and then denied Him through fear of a maid-servant; so now, after publicly protesting against the

notion of making any difference between the Jew and the Gentile, and against laying on the neck of the latter a yoke which the former had never been able to bear, we find him contradicting his own principles, and, through fear of those who were of the circumcision, giving all the sanction of his example to the introduction of caste into the Church of Christ. . . . Other Jewish Christians, as was naturally to be expected, were led away by his example; and even Barnabas, the chosen companion of the Apostle of the Gentiles, who had been a witness and an actor in all the great transactions in Cyprus, in Pisidia, and Lycaonia,—even Barnabas the missionary was "carried away" with the dissimulation of the rest. When St. Paul was a spectator of such inconsistency, and perceived both the motive in which it originated and the results to which it was leading, he would have been a traitor to his Master's cause if he had hesitated (to use his own emphatic words) to rebuke Peter "before all," and to "withstand him to the face."

How long the division between Peter and Paul continued we know not, but it is 'very pleasant to turn to a passage at the conclusion of one of St. Peter's letters, where, in speaking of the long-suffering of our Lord, and of the prospect of sinless happiness in the world to come, he alludes in touching words to the epistles of *our beloved brother Paul*. We see how entirely past differences are forgotten, how all earthly misunderstandings are absorbed and lost in the contemplation of Christ and the eternal life.' Respecting St. Peter's visit to and connection with Antioch, there is an ancient and well-known tradition which represents St. Peter as having held the see of Antioch for seven years before that of Rome. The tradition, however, cannot be said to be supported by what we know of the history of the apostle.

*The Separation of Barnabas and Paul—The Second Missionary Journey of St. Paul—Asia Minor, xv. 37-xvi. 8.*

Ver. 37. **And Barnabas determined to take with them John, whose surname was Mark.** Barnabas seems at once to have fallen in with the wishes of Paul, and to have consented to visit again with him those Gentile congregations they had gathered together in their first missionary journey; but Barnabas advised that they should take with them Mark again, as their trusted friend and companion. There is no doubt that Barnabas was influenced by the relationship of Mark to him; still, the conduct of Barnabas on this occasion is strictly in accordance with the rest of the acts of his life, so far as we are acquainted with them. The old kindness of heart which prompted him in old days to seek out Saul, the former persecutor of the followers of Jesus, and to plead his cause with the Jewish Christian leaders at Jerusalem, now induced him to forget Mark's former faint-heartedness, and to welcome him again as a fellow-labourer in the Master's cause.

In the all-seeing wisdom of God, the stern severity of Paul and the gentle love of Barnabas, on the one side seem to have deeply humbled, and on the other to have preserved from despondency, the hitherto weak and vacillating spirit of the young disciple, who became, under the tutelage of Barnabas, subsequently one of the brave Christian leaders of the first days.

Ver. 38. **But Paul thought not good to take**

him with them. 'We may well believe that Paul's own mouth gave originally the character to this sentence' (Alford).

**Who departed from them from Pamphylia.** See Acts xiii. 13, where this backsliding of Mark is briefly mentioned. Some have tried to excuse the desertion of Mark by supposing it was on account of illness or weak health, but Paul would never have censured him so severely had this really been the cause of his leaving them. No doubt the young man shrank from the toils and dangers of the work, and such conduct one like Paul could never bear or even find excuses for. It has been suggested with some reason that the dispute between Peter and Paul, in which Barnabas even was carried away by the party opposing Paul, had left behind a coolness between the two former friends; and on this account Paul was less likely to condone any former offence or weakness shown by Barnabas' nephew. The strict and truthful accuracy of the writer of these 'Acts' is shown by his faithful record of the parting between the two friends Barnabas and Paul. It was necessary for his history of the first beginnings of Christianity to show how the founders of the Gentile missions first separated and chose independent fields of labour; therefore, in his work, the writer does not shrink from telling the story of this sorrowful dispute. Both those noble men seemed to have erred—the one perhaps too harsh, the other too forgiving; neither chose to yield his opinion, and so they parted. The New Testament writers, faithful and true, tell us but of One Teacher whose love and charity never failed.

**Ver. 39. And the contention was so sharp between them, that they departed asunder one from the other.** Neither would yield; they separated for ever. This is the last mention of the generous-hearted Barnabas in the 'Acts.' However, if the two old friends and devoted servants of God parted in anger, they soon forgot all bitterness; for, in the first Corinthian letter, Paul speaks in high terms of Barnabas as of one busy in the Master's service, while in later days he writes even of Mark as his fellow-labourer, as of one who was profitable to the ministry, and one of the causes of his (Paul's) comfort (Philemon 24; 2 Tim. iv. 11; Col. iv. 10, 11).

**And so Barnabas took Mark, and sailed unto Cyprus.** 'If, as the shores of Asia lessened upon his sight, the spirit of prophecy had entered into the heart of the weak disciple, who had turned back when his hand was on the plough, and who had been judged, by the chiefest of Christ's captains, unworthy thenceforward to go forth with him to the work, how wonderful would he have thought it that by the lion symbol in future ages he was to be represented among men! How woeful, that the war-cry of his name should so often reanimate the rage of the soldier on those very plains where he himself had failed in the courage of the Christian, and so often dye with fruitless blood that very Cypriot Sea over whose waves, in repentance and shame, he was following the Son of Consolation!' (Ruskin, *Stones of Venice*, 'The Sea Stories,' chap. iv.).

In later times, we know Mark became once more the loved and trusted companion of Paul (see above for New Test. ref.). We find him with Peter at Babylon (1 Pet. v. 13). In the closing days of Paul's life, he seems to have been with Timothy at Ephesus (2 Tim. iv. 11). That he was

long the trusted friend and secretary of Peter was the undisputed tradition of the early Church. Papias, writing very early in the second century, records how John the elder said: 'Mark, being the interpreter of Peter, wrote down exactly whatever things he remembered, but yet not in the order in which Christ either spoke or did them, for he was neither a hearer nor a follower of the Lord's, but he was afterwards, as I (Papias) said, a follower of Peter.' Another record speaks of Mark as Peter's companion at Rome. Subsequently, church historians relate how Mark founded (probably organized) the Church of Alexandria, and became its bishop, and there endured a martyr's death.

**Ver. 40. And Paul chose Silas.** Silas was one of the deputies chosen to accompany Paul and Barnabas by the Jerusalem Council. He was eminently fitted for the work to which Paul appointed him. A leader in the Jerusalem Church, and one who stood high in the opinion of the apostles and elders of the mother Church, he was able, from his own personal knowledge, to bear his testimony to the perfect accord which reigned between Paul and the older apostles.

**Being recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God.** The feeling of the majority of the Antioch Christians in the matter of the dispute between Paul and Barnabas was evidently with the former; for, when Paul had selected his companion, and was ready to start on his great work, he was especially commended by the brethren to the grace of God, thus receiving a solemn official sanction to his mission.

**Ver. 41. And he went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches.** Nothing in detail is known of the foundation and early history of these congregations. Their existence, however, at this early period, testifies to the marvellous and rapid spread of the gospel of Jesus Christ during the first years which followed the Ascension.

#### EXCURSUS A.

##### ON THE GREAT QUESTION WHICH WAS DECIDED BY THE FIRST CHURCH COUNCIL.

In the first years which succeeded their Master's ascension, the disciples evidently, while following out the line of conduct traced for them by their Divine Friend and Teacher, remained in all outward observances *strict Jews*. During these early years there was no sign in the growing Church of Jerusalem and Palestine that the followers of Jesus of Nazareth would ever be different from the rest of the widely-scattered chosen people, save that the Nazarene Jew would hold that Messiah had appeared, and had shown Himself to His people. No bar, indeed, existed between the outer Gentile world and the little Church of Jesus. Any one might enter the fold of Christ and join the brotherhood which called on the Crucified, but in that case the converted one must become a *Jew*.

The Samaritans converted by the preaching of Philip the Ethiopian treasurer, and Cornelius the centurion, are hardly exceptions to what seems to have been the early rule of the believers in Jesus. These had been connected more or less closely with Judaism before their admission into the brotherhood, and no doubt, after their conversion to the faith of Christ, more closely cemented their connection with the Hebrew race, its ritual, and its hopes.

But the rise of the Church of Antioch, and the

successful missionary efforts of Barnabas and Paul in Asia Minor, brought the older disciples—the men who had been with Jesus during His early life—face to face with great questions which were stirred up by this rapid and (apparently by them) undreamed-of increase in the number of foreign believers in Jesus.

Was the great Gentile world, then beginning to listen to their Divine Master's voice, to be told that before they might join the new society which Jesus had founded, they must submit to the laws and ordinances of the Hebrew race, to rites and customs which would effectually separate them for ever from the rest of the world? Or, in other words, must the Gentiles be told if they would become Christians they must first become Jews? The Church of Antioch and their famous missionary teachers, Barnabas and Paul, had already practically answered the question when they offered the privileges of the brotherhood to all who chose to take upon them the easy yoke and light burden of Jesus Christ. Their offer they hampered with no conditions of ceremonial, no obligation of virtual separation from the peoples around; any one, Greek, Roman, or Asiatic, if he would promise to live the pure, noble life Christ taught, might become a Christian without becoming at the same time a Jew.

But there were men in the Jerusalem Church, men dwelling under the shadow of the temple, in daily contact with the rigid and exclusive Pharisee party,—not improbably Pharisees themselves still, though believers on Jesus,—to whom this brotherhood with Gentiles, uncircumcised and untaught in the stern, exclusive Mosaic ritual, was a thought abhorrent and unbearable. Some such fanatic spirits, we read in chap. xv. ver. 1 of the Acts, went down—most probably uncommissioned by the apostles—to Antioch, to endeavour to force a stricter practice on the daring and innovating church of the great Syrian city.

This interference of the mother Church of Christianity with the powerful and energetic Gentile Church of Antioch, called for prompt and immediate action on the part of those who presided over the Syrian communities. The question was indeed a vital one; then or never must it be decided, was Christianity to be preached to all peoples as a world religion, or was belief in Jesus to be merely a tenet of a Pharisee sect of the great Jewish nation? No thought of a schism seems to have for an instant clouded the minds of the Antioch leaders. They felt the deep importance of the crisis. They would seek out of themselves the honoured fathers of the Jerusalem Church; would tell them of the mighty victories already won in their common Master's name; would describe to them the vast fields opening out before them, already white for harvest; and then would appeal to their great, loving hearts, if such a work ought to be marred, or at least narrowed, by the rigid enforcement of any stern Hebrew rites and laws. This mission—the object of which was lovingly to conciliate the Jewish Christian leaders—was entrusted by the Antioch brotherhood to the generous Barnabas and the enthusiastic Paul.

It was completely successful. The story of Paul's work at Antioch and Iconium, in Lystra and Derbe, told with the warm, bright eloquence of the noble and devoted missionary, at once won over to what we may term the Gentile side the old companions of the Lord, Peter and James and John, the pillars

of the mother Church. A spirit of loving conciliation brooded over this first and chiefest of Church Councils. Paul and Barnabas gladly offered for the Gentiles to give up practices specially repugnant in the eyes of a pious Jew, while Peter and the apostles for ever sanctioned the admission of stranger peoples into the brotherhood of Christians, without requiring from the peoples so admitted any submission to Jewish rites or obedience to Jewish ceremonial laws.

But while the leaders of the Jerusalem community took a broad and generous view of this vital question, upon which the future of Christianity depended, there were others in the same Hebrew Church who clung to the old distinctions, and persisted in regarding their Gentile fellow-believers as unclean. These, and the men who thought with them, were those relentless Judaizing antagonists who embittered Paul's long and successful career. With scarcely an exception, the letters of the great missionary all refer, in terms more or less anxious, to this sleepless, intense hostility on the part of a Jewish section of Christians. After the death of Paul, for some time we have some difficulty in exactly defining the relations between the Gentile and Jewish parties in the Christian Church. The fall of Jerusalem, however, shortly after the apostle's martyrdom, and the destruction of the temple, no doubt was a fatal blow to the Judaizing section of the Christian communities in all countries. The reprisals which closed the bloody episode of the rebellion of Barcochba, 'the son of the star,' in Palestine some sixty-three years after the fall of the city, when Rome stamped out the remains of Judaism with crushing severity, completed the ruin of the Jewish Christian Church. The practice of circumcision, the observance of the Sabbath, and other marks of Judaism were visited with extreme penalties. Henceforth their numbers were so diminished, and their influence in consequence so weakened, that their existence could no longer be deemed a serious danger to the Christian Gentile Church. Still, with that strange tenacity which characterizes the Hebrew race, the broken and ruined sect held together, and we can trace its life as far as the fifth century of our era. They were divided into two sects. The smaller, known as Nazarenes, while clinging to the old Mosaic law with a passionate love, were for the most part orthodox in their creed, and held communion with Catholic Christians. These for the most part dwelt in Palestine or the neighbouring countries. The larger and most important sect were usually termed Ebionites, and were not confined to Palestine, but were to be found in Rome and in most of the great cities where Jews lived and traded.

These Judaizing Christians rigidly observed the ordinances of Moses, and refused to acknowledge as brethren any who declined strictly to conform to the old Jewish law. These naturally rejected as false and heretical the writings of St. Paul, whose memory they held in abhorrence; as was to be expected in these unhappy descendants of the first rebels in the Christian camp, they gradually changed the fundamental articles of faith delivered to the Church by those men whom the Lord Himself had taught. We read even how these Ebionite Christians held the Redeemer of the world to be a mere man, the son of Joseph and Mary.

These heretics formed a powerful and numerous party in the second and third centuries of our era. In the dim twilight of these early days, we con-

stantly catch sight of these enemies, ever bitter and hostile to the orthodox Christians; we even in the so-called Clementine writings—the *Homilies* and *Recognitions*—possess fragments of their literature.

Towards the close of the fourth century, though still numerous in many of the great cities of the empire, the number of the Ebionites was gradually diminishing; and after the first half of the fifth century, the heresy, which we first read of in the fifteenth chapter of the 'Acts,' threatening the very existence of the Gentile Church of Antioch, seems to have died out.

Bishop Lightfoot, in the dissertation which closes his commentary on the Galatian Epistle, well sums up the lesson which Christians of our time may learn from this history of the first ages of the gospel. 'We may well take courage,' he writes, 'from the study. However great may be the theological differences and religious animosities of our own time, they are far surpassed in magnitude by the distractions of an age which, closing our eyes to facts, we are apt to invest with an ideal excellence. In the early Church was fulfilled, in its inward dissensions no less than in its outward sufferings, the Master's sad warning, that He came not to send peace on earth, but a sword.'

#### EXCURSUS B.

##### THE MEMBERS WHO COMPOSED THE COUNCIL.

The Council was probably of a much more representative character than has been usually supposed, or than appears from the brief notice of Acts xv. It was more than a mere meeting of certain chosen delegates from two churches, Jerusalem and Antioch, presided over by two or more of the older apostles. The Church of Antioch, in the persons of Paul and Barnabas, represented the thoughts and feelings of far distant Gentile churches; for many of those congregations gathered together in the centre of Asia Minor must have been mainly composed of Heathen, not of Jewish element. The Church of Jerusalem, again, represented the thoughts and feelings not merely of the Palestine Jews, but of the Jews scattered over the whole known world. The Hebrew Christians of Jerusalem and of the Holy Land were only a portion of that community of believers which made up the Jerusalem Church. From the statement of Acts vi., we learn that each of the great foreign Jewish colonies possessed a synagogue at Jerusalem. No doubt many a foreign Jew was drawn by motives of religious attachment to settle in the famous historical centre of this race, so that a large colony of strangers found a permanent home in the neighbourhood of the Jerusalem Temple. This colony of foreign Jews was made up and constantly recruited from world-renowned marts like Alexandria or Rome, from famous cities like Cyrene and Tarsus; and at certain seasons, at the Passover, for instance, these colonies of foreign Jews at Jerusalem were largely increased. These strangers of the people, when they visited the land and home of their fathers, found a welcome in the various foreign synagogues established in Jerusalem, where they heard the law read and expounded in the language or dialects familiar to them, and even listened to Rabbis trained in the peculiar school of teaching to which they were attached. From these varied centres of Jewish thought, the Nazarene, or as it

was subsequently called the Christian, brotherhood was of course largely recruited.

Among the 'elders' assembled that day with the apostles, we can well imagine representatives of each peculiar rabbinic school,—men who, even after their conversion to Christianity, still ordered their lives in strict conformity to the traditions of the school to which they formerly belonged. There were some, doubtless, of that rigid and exclusive Pharisee sect which declared glass vessels and the very soil of Gentile lands unclean; these set their faces not merely against encouraging proselytes from the Gentile people, but even declined all social intercourse with the hated stranger. There were others who must have once listened to the teaching of Philo of Alexandria, the leader of Jewish thought in that great Egyptian city, the home of so many of the chosen people. These must have heard a far broader interpretation of the law and the prophets than their Pharisee brethren in the Holy Land were accustomed to receive from the famous Palestine teachers; and the thought of a great Gentile Church sharing the same privileges as they enjoyed, could hardly have been a strange idea to men who had heard a teaching which attempted 'to make their sacred records of the remote past of the patriarchal age speak the thoughts of the schools of Greece.'

Some of the 'elders' who assisted at that Council must have been pupils in the school of that famous Hillel who taught his disciples to love and to bring all men into communion with the law,—a law which, he explained, was comprehended in a generous, all-embracing love.

An assembly thus composed of representatives of the principal Jewish schools then existing in Palestine and in foreign countries, as well as of the new Gentile communities of Antioch and of Asia Minor, may well be termed a 'General Council.' Such an assembly only could have put out authoritatively, decrees at once so practical and conciliatory, and at the same time acceptable to all except those bigoted and fanatical Jews who wished to exclude every Gentile soul from all religious privileges in this life, and from all share of blessedness in the life to come.

#### EXCURSUS C.

##### THE CANONS OF THE COUNCIL.

The Canons of the first Christian Council must always command a peculiar and especial interest. This Council was held at Jerusalem, about the year 50 of our era. Christianity had already spread to a wide extent among the Gentile peoples; the great missionary who had mainly accomplished this work was St. Paul of Tarsus. A bitter opposition on the part of the Jews had sprung up in Antioch and in other centres against his teaching and his practice. To defend himself, his teaching and his acts, and to prevent, if possible, anything like a schism among the followers of Jesus of Nazareth, St. Paul came to Jerusalem and there publicly met the original teachers, the universally-acknowledged 'pillars' of Christianity. Among the most prominent were St. Peter, St. James, the Lord's brother, and St. John.

The rough abstract of the decision which these venerable elders of our faith came to on this memorable occasion, has excited much contro-



versy. The Gentiles who had turned unto God were not to be troubled with any Jewish obligations; they were to be received into the Christian brotherhood on the condition simply of abstaining from four practices peculiarly abhorrent to the Jewish mind.

Now, it is the broad gulf which separates one of these four (fornication) from the other three which constitutes, in great measure, the difficulty we speak of. Why, it is asked, is this deadly sin joined to and apparently placed on the same platform with three comparatively indifferent acts? On consideration, it appears that two great points were involved in these simple canons—(1) The relations of the Gentile converts to the great mass of the Heathen peoples around them; (2) The relations of these same converts to the Jewish Christian community in whose society in many places they would be constantly thrown. The four commands, we shall see, fall naturally into two groups. The first, involving the relation of Christians to the heathen world, contains the warning against pollutions of idols and fornication. The second has exclusively in view the necessary connection between Gentile and Jewish converts, and selects from the elaborate system of Hebrew ordinances the two which would most nearly affect all intercourse between these two classes of Christian converts.

In the first group, 'the pollution of idols' involved far more than the mere eating of meats offered in an idol temple. The inspired framers of these primitive decrees well knew that 'an idol was nothing in the world, and that there was none other God but one;' but they knew, too, that the idol-worship of the first century of our era, the age in which they lived, poisoned the whole life of society in Greece, in Italy, in the East. One who certainly would paint no over-coloured picture of the degradation of Pagan life well writes:<sup>1</sup>—'The voluptuous worship of Aphrodite gave a kind of religious sanction to their (Courtesans') profession. Courtesans were the priestesses in her temples, and those of Corinth were believed by their prayers to have averted calamities from their city. Prostitution is said to have entered into the religious rites of Babylon, Byblos, Cyprus, and Corinth; and these, as well as Miletus, Tenedos, Lesbos, and Abydos, became famous for their schools of vice which grew up under the shadow of the temples.' Another writer tells us:<sup>2</sup> 'If we wish to realize the appearance and reality of the complicated heathenism of the first Christian century, we must endeavour to imagine the scene of the "Daphne" suburb of Antioch, with its fountains and groves of bay trees, its bright buildings, its crowds of licentious votaries, its statue of Apollo, where under the climate of Syria and the wealthy patronage of Rome all that was beautiful in nature and art had created a sanctuary for a perpetual festival of vice.' To the warning respecting 'pollutions of idols,' the council added a command to abstain from fornication, a deadly group of sins closely associated with much of the current idol-worship of the day; and, indeed, it was time to call the attention of mankind to the imperative duty of gravely renouncing those sins which the popular religion of the day had not only condoned, but had even glorified with the halo of a sacred sanction.

The second group contains what may be termed ceremonial charges to abstain from the flesh of animals which had been strangled (that is, whose blood was not poured forth), and generally from the eating of blood. Neglect of this simple injunction in a state of society where Jewish and Gentile converts were so frequently and so intimately thrown together, would have been a fruitful source of bitter hate and recrimination, for the pious Jew from time immemorial had been trained to regard blood as a sacred thing. The symbolic holiness of blood was taught to Noah the patriarch; it was repeated with strange persistence among the desert laws to Moses; it is reiterated in Deuteronomy. The perpetually-recurring sacrifices ever kept alive in the homes of Israel the same solemn mysterious truth, that it was 'the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul' (Lev. xvii. 11). This strange Hebrew reverence for blood, the command reiterated so often in the law,<sup>1</sup> that no blood be mixed with their food, bore witness to the deep-seated belief in the heart of Israel, that in some mysterious way blood was the agent of the purification of all things, 'that all things were to be purged with blood; that without shedding of blood there was no remission' (Heb. ix. 22). Nor could this people be expected to see as yet, that their holiest type, their most sacred symbol, was for ever done away with, now that men and angels had seen poured out once and for ever THE BLOOD of the sinless Sufferer.

It is exceedingly doubtful if these primitive Canons were in any way founded on the so-called seven precepts of Noah; for of the four articles in which the decisions of the Council were embodied, only one, 'the eating of the blood,' is directly named in these seven precepts. Neither is it probable that the apostles and elders proposed to convert the Gentile converts into 'proselytes of the gate,'—men who, while remaining uncircumcised, became worshippers of the one true God, and observed the seven precepts of Noah which forbade blasphemy, idolatry, murder, incest, theft, disobedience to magistrates, and eating flesh with the blood in it,—for the very existence of this class of 'proselytes of the gate' in the time of the apostles rests on doubtful authority. The four articles seem rather to have been dictated by the needs of the times. How could the Gentile be received into the brotherhood of Christ with the least possible disturbance of his everyday life in the busy world, with the least possible shock to the prejudices of those Jews with whom he would come in contact, due regard being had, on the one hand, to the pure life commanded by Jesus, and, on the other, to that love and mutual forbearance which are the spirit of Christianity? The Council of Jerusalem answers these questions by the four commands they sent out to all Gentile converts. Two of these charges tell them, if they would be Christians, then they must separate themselves from the impure licence of the Pagan life. The other two forbid them rudely to shock the consciences of their fellow-believers, the redeemed of Israel.

The spirit of these first decrees of the Christian Church, which enjoined purity of life, brotherly forbearance and love, on its earliest disciples, was meant to be lasting; but the decrees themselves were intended only to be in force while the causes

<sup>1</sup> Lecky, *Hist. of European Morals*, chap. v.

<sup>2</sup> Conybeare and Howson, *St. Paul*, chap. iv.

<sup>1</sup> Gen. ix. 4; Lev. xvii. 13, 14; Deut. xii. 16, 23.

which called them forth endured. As Christianity spread and its doctrines became generally known, the old Pagan life withered away, its gods became universally discredited, its temples were deserted without the aid of laws and decrees forbidding men to frequent their polluted courts; while those Jews who welcomed the knowledge of Christ became merged in the new society, and as years passed on, gradually came to see that all symbols of the great sacrifice were useless, and might be

laid aside, now that the great sacrifice itself had been offered.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Catholic Church, till nearly the time of St. Augustine, complying with the decree of this first Council, abstained from eating blood; but, in the days of St. Augustine, this practice seems to have ceased altogether in the African Church (see *contra Manich.* xxxii. 13, quoted by Meyer). Strict rules on this point were enacted in the Council of Gangra, and again in the Council of Trullo. It is also strictly prohibited in the so-called Apostolic Canons (see Bingham, *Chr. Ant.* xvii. 5)

## CHAPTER XVI.

*Paul and Silas visit certain of the Churches founded by himself and Barnabas on their First Missionary Journey—Paul preaches for the First Time in Europe—The Church of Philippi is founded.*

1 **T**HEN came he to <sup>a</sup>Derbe and <sup>a</sup>Lystra: and behold, a certain disciple was there, named <sup>b</sup>Timotheus,<sup>1</sup> <sup>c</sup>the son of a certain woman, *which was* a Jewess,<sup>2</sup> and believed; but his father *was* a Greek: Which <sup>d</sup>was well reported of by the brethren that were at <sup>e</sup>Lystra and <sup>f</sup>Iconium. Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and <sup>g</sup>took and circumcised him because of the Jews which were in those quarters: for they <sup>h</sup>knew all that his father was a Greek. And as they went through the cities, they delivered them the <sup>i</sup>decrees for to keep, <sup>j</sup>that were ordained of the apostles and <sup>k</sup>elders which were at Jerusalem. And so were <sup>l</sup>the churches <sup>m</sup>established in the faith, and increased in number daily.

6 Now when they had gone <sup>n</sup>throughout <sup>o</sup>Phrygia and the region <sup>p</sup>of <sup>q</sup>Galatia, and were forbidden <sup>r</sup>of the Holy Ghost <sup>s</sup>to preach the word in <sup>t</sup>Asia, After they were come to Mysia, <sup>u</sup>they assayed to go into <sup>v</sup>Bithynia: but the Spirit <sup>w</sup>suffered them not. And they passing by Mysia came down to <sup>x</sup>Troas.

9 And <sup>y</sup>a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood <sup>z</sup>a man of <sup>aa</sup>Macedonia, and prayed <sup>ab</sup>him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us. And after he had seen <sup>ac</sup>the vision, immediately <sup>ad</sup>we endeavoured to go into <sup>ae</sup>Macedonia, <sup>af</sup>assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the

11 gospel unto them. Therefore loosing from <sup>ag</sup>Troas, we <sup>ah</sup>came

<sup>a</sup> See ch. xiv. 6.

<sup>b</sup> Ch. xvii. 14.

<sup>c</sup> 15, xviii. 5.

<sup>d</sup> xix. 22, xx. 45.

<sup>e</sup> Rom. xvi. 21.

<sup>f</sup> 1 Cor. iv. 17.

<sup>g</sup> xvi. 10.

<sup>h</sup> 2 Cor. i. 1, 19.

<sup>i</sup> Phil. i. 1, ii. 19.

<sup>j</sup> Col. i. 1.

<sup>k</sup> 1 Thess. i. 1.

<sup>l</sup> iii. 2, 6.

<sup>m</sup> 2 Thess. i. 1.

<sup>n</sup> 1 Tim. i. 2.

<sup>o</sup> 18, vi. 20.

<sup>p</sup> 2 Tim. i. 2.

<sup>q</sup> Philem. 1.

<sup>r</sup> Heb. xiii. 23.

<sup>s</sup> 2 Tim. i. 5.

<sup>t</sup> So 2 Tim. iii. 15.

<sup>u</sup> See ch. vi. 3.

<sup>v</sup> See ch. xiv. 1.

<sup>w</sup> Cp. 1 Cor. ix. 20 with Gal. ii. 3 and v. 2.

<sup>x</sup> Mat. xxv. 24 (Gk.).

<sup>y</sup> See Lu. ii. 1.

<sup>z</sup> Ch. xv. 28, 29.

<sup>aa</sup> See ch. xi. 30.

<sup>ab</sup> So ch. xv. 4.

<sup>ac</sup> See 1 Pet. v. 9.

<sup>ad</sup> See ch. ii. 10.

<sup>ae</sup> Ch. xviii. 23.

<sup>af</sup> 1 Cor. xvi. 1.

<sup>ag</sup> Gal. i. 2, iii. 1.

<sup>ah</sup> 2 Tim. iv. 10.

<sup>ai</sup> 1 Pet. i. 1.

<sup>aj</sup> See ch. ii. 9.

<sup>ak</sup> See Rom. i. 13.

<sup>al</sup> 1 Pet. i. 2.

<sup>am</sup> Ver. 11.

<sup>an</sup> ch. xx. 5, 6.

<sup>ao</sup> 2 Cor. ii. 12.

<sup>ap</sup> 2 Tim. iv. 13.

<sup>aq</sup> Ver. 10. See ch. xii. 9.

<sup>ar</sup> Vers. 11, 15.

<sup>as</sup> 17; ch. xx. 5 to end of Acts. See Col. iv. 14.

<sup>at</sup> Ch. ix. 28 (Gk.).

<sup>au</sup> Ch. xxi. 2.

<sup>1</sup> or 'Timothy.'

<sup>2</sup> The older authorities omitting 'certain,' the translation will run thus: 'the son of a Jewish woman.'

<sup>3</sup> better, 'and so the churches were,' etc.

<sup>4</sup> The older authorities read a 2d aorist instead of a participle here; the rendering then is, 'and they went through.'

<sup>5</sup> more accurately, 'the country of Phrygia and Galatia.'

<sup>6</sup> literally, 'having been forbidden.'

<sup>7</sup> or 'Holy Spirit.'

<sup>8</sup> The older authorities also here insert after 'the Spirit' the words 'of Jesus.'

<sup>9</sup> better, 'There was standing.'

<sup>10</sup> and praying him

with a straight course to Samothracia, and the next *day* to  
 12 Neapolis; And from thence to <sup>x</sup> Philippi, which is the chief<sup>11</sup>  
 city of *that* part of <sup>y</sup> Macedonia, *and* <sup>z</sup> a colony: and we were  
 in that<sup>12</sup> city abiding certain days.

13 And on the sabbath we went out of the city<sup>13</sup> by a river side,  
 where prayer was wont to be made,<sup>14</sup> and we sat down, and  
 14 spake unto the women which resorted *thither*.<sup>15</sup> And a certain  
 woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of <sup>a</sup> Thya-  
 tira, <sup>b</sup> which worshipped God, heard *us*: whose <sup>c</sup> heart the Lord  
 opened, that *she* attended unto the *things* which were spoken of

15 Paul. And when she was baptized, <sup>d</sup> and her household, she  
 besought *us*, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the  
 Lord, come into my house, and abide *there*. And she <sup>e</sup> con-  
 16 strained us. And it came to pass, as we went to <sup>f</sup> prayer,<sup>16</sup> a  
 certain damsel possessed with <sup>g</sup> a spirit of <sup>h</sup> divination<sup>17</sup> met us,

17 which brought her masters <sup>i</sup> much gain by soothsaying: The  
 same followed Paul and us, and cried,<sup>18</sup> saying, <sup>j</sup> These men are  
 the servants of <sup>k</sup> the most high God, which show unto us<sup>19</sup> the  
 18 way of salvation. And this did she many days. <sup>l</sup> But Paul,  
<sup>m</sup> being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee  
 in the name of Jesus Christ <sup>n</sup> to come out of her. <sup>o</sup> And he<sup>20</sup>

19 came out the same hour. And <sup>p</sup> when her masters saw that the  
 hope of their <sup>q</sup> gains was gone,<sup>21</sup> they caught <sup>r</sup> Paul and <sup>s</sup> Silas,  
 20 and <sup>t</sup> drew *them* into the market-place unto the rulers,<sup>22</sup> And  
 brought them to <sup>u</sup> the magistrates,<sup>23</sup> saying, These men, being

21 Jews, <sup>v</sup> do exceedingly trouble our city, And <sup>w</sup> teach customs  
 which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, <sup>x</sup> being  
 22 Romans. And the multitude rose up together against them:  
 and the <sup>y</sup> magistrates<sup>24</sup> rent off their clothes,<sup>25</sup> and commanded  
 23 <sup>z</sup> to beat *them*.<sup>26</sup> And when they had laid many <sup>a</sup> stripes upon  
 them, they cast *them* into prison, charging <sup>b</sup> the jailor to keep

24 them safely: Who, having received such a charge, thrust them  
 into the inner <sup>c</sup> prison, and made their feet fast <sup>d</sup> in the stocks.

25 And <sup>e</sup> at midnight Paul and <sup>f</sup> Silas prayed, and <sup>g</sup> sang  
 26 praises.<sup>27</sup> unto God: and the prisoners heard them.<sup>28</sup> And

<sup>11</sup> *better rendered*, 'which is a city of Macedonia, the first (city) of the district,' etc. <sup>12</sup> *literally*, 'in this city.'

<sup>13</sup> *Many, but not all the older authorities, instead of* 'out of the city,' *read here* 'out of the gate.'

<sup>14</sup> *Some have suggested that the rendering here should be*, 'where we thought was a *Proseucha* (a place of prayer).'<sup>15</sup> *literally*, 'which had come together.'

<sup>16</sup> *better*, 'to the *Proseucha* (the place of prayer).'

<sup>17</sup> *literally*, 'possessing a spirit of divination.'<sup>18</sup> *better*, 'and continued crying.'

<sup>19</sup> *The older authorities, instead of* 'to us,' *read here* 'to you.'

<sup>20</sup> *he (that is, the spirit of divination) came out* <sup>21</sup> *was gone out*

<sup>22</sup> *literally*, 'having seized Paul and Silas, they drew,' etc.

<sup>23</sup> *the magistrates* <sup>24</sup> *better*, 'the prætors.'

<sup>25</sup> *tore their clothes off them* <sup>26</sup> *to beat them with rods*

<sup>27</sup> *were praying and singing hymns* <sup>28</sup> *were listening to them*

<sup>x</sup> Ch. xx. 6;

<sup>y</sup> Phil. i. 1;

<sup>z</sup> 1 Thes. ii. 2.

<sup>a</sup> Vers. 9, 10;

<sup>b</sup> ch. xviii. 5;

<sup>c</sup> xix. 21, 22;

<sup>d</sup> 29. xx. 1, 3;

<sup>e</sup> Ro n. xv. 26;

<sup>f</sup> 1 Cor. xvi. 5;

<sup>g</sup> 2 Cor. i. 16;

<sup>h</sup> ii. 13, vii. 5;

<sup>i</sup> viii. 1, xi. 9;

<sup>j</sup> Phil. iv. 15;

<sup>k</sup> 1 Thes. i. 7;

<sup>l</sup> 8, iv. 10;

<sup>m</sup> 1 Tim. i. 3.

<sup>n</sup> Ver. vi.

<sup>o</sup> Rev. i. 11

<sup>p</sup> ii. 18, 24

<sup>q</sup> Ch. xviii. 7.

<sup>r</sup> See ch. xiii.

<sup>s</sup> 43.

<sup>t</sup> So Lu. xxiv.

<sup>u</sup> 32. 45.

<sup>v</sup> See ch. xi. 14.

<sup>w</sup> Lu. xxiv. 29.

<sup>x</sup> So Gen. xix.

<sup>y</sup> 3. See Job

<sup>z</sup> xxxi. 32.

<sup>a</sup> Ver. 13.

<sup>b</sup> See Lu. xiii.

<sup>c</sup> 11.

<sup>d</sup> So 1 Sam.

<sup>e</sup> xxviii. 7:

<sup>f</sup> 1 Chron. x.

<sup>g</sup> 13. See

<sup>h</sup> Lev. xix. 32.

<sup>i</sup> Ch. xix. 24;

<sup>j</sup> ver. 30 (Gk.).

<sup>k</sup> Cp. Mk. i. 34.

<sup>l</sup> See Mk. v. 7.

<sup>m</sup> Ch. iv. 2

<sup>n</sup> (Gk.).

<sup>o</sup> Mk. i. 25.

<sup>p</sup> See Mk. xvi.

<sup>q</sup> 17.

<sup>r</sup> So ch. xix.

<sup>s</sup> 25, 26.

<sup>t</sup> See ch. xv.

<sup>u</sup> 34.

<sup>v</sup> Ch. xxi. 30;

<sup>w</sup> Jas. ii. 6.

<sup>x</sup> So Mat. x. 18.

<sup>y</sup> Vers. 22, 35.

<sup>z</sup> 36, 38 (Gk.).

<sup>a</sup> not as ver 19)

<sup>b</sup> So 1 Kings

<sup>c</sup> xviii. 17.

<sup>d</sup> ch. xvii. 6.

<sup>e</sup> Cp. Esth. iii.

<sup>f</sup> 8

<sup>g</sup> Ver. 12.

<sup>h</sup> 2 Cor. xi. 25

<sup>i</sup> (Gk.). So

<sup>j</sup> 1 Thes. ii. 2.

<sup>k</sup> 2 Cor. vi. 5.

<sup>l</sup> xi. 23.

<sup>m</sup> Vers. 27, 36

<sup>n</sup> in the Gk.

<sup>o</sup> See Lu. xxi.

<sup>p</sup> 12.

<sup>q</sup> Job xiii. 27,

<sup>r</sup> xxxiii. 11;

<sup>s</sup> Jer. xx. 2, 3,

<sup>t</sup> xxix. 26.

<sup>u</sup> P. cxix. 6a.

<sup>v</sup> See Job

<sup>w</sup> xxxv. 10.

<sup>x</sup> Vers. 19, 29.

<sup>y</sup> So Eph. v. 19

suddenly <sup>c</sup> there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations <sup>c</sup> Mat. xviii. 2.  
of the prison were shaken: and immediately all <sup>c</sup> the doors <sup>c</sup> So ch. iv. 31.  
27 were opened, and <sup>c</sup> every one's bands were loosed. And <sup>c</sup> the <sup>c</sup> Ch. v. 19.  
keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep,<sup>29</sup> and seeing the <sup>c</sup> So ch. xii. 10.  
prison doors open, drew out <sup>c</sup> his sword, and would have killed <sup>c</sup> So ch. xii. 7.  
28 himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled.<sup>31</sup> But Paul <sup>c</sup> Ver. 23 (Gk.).  
cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are  
29 all here. Then he called for a light, and <sup>c</sup> sprang in, and came <sup>c</sup> Ch. xiv. 14  
30 trembling, and <sup>c</sup> fell down before Paul and <sup>c</sup> Silas, And brought <sup>c</sup> (Gk.)  
31 them out, and said, Sirs, <sup>c</sup> what must I do to be saved? And <sup>c</sup> So ch. x. 25  
they said, <sup>m</sup> Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ,<sup>32</sup> and thou shalt <sup>c</sup> See Lu. iii.  
32 be saved,<sup>33</sup> and <sup>m</sup> thy house. And they spake unto him the <sup>c</sup> See Mk. xvi.  
33 word of the Lord, and <sup>34</sup> to <sup>35</sup> <sup>m</sup> all that were in his house. And <sup>c</sup> 16. So  
he took them <sup>c</sup> the same hour of the night, and washed <sup>c</sup> Jo. vi. 47.  
34 stripes; and <sup>m</sup> was baptized, he and <sup>m</sup> all his, straightway. And <sup>c</sup> See ch. xi. 14.  
when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before <sup>c</sup> Ver. 25.  
them, and rejoiced, believing in God with <sup>m</sup> all his house.  
35 And when it was day, <sup>c</sup> the magistrates <sup>36</sup> sent the serjeants,<sup>37</sup> <sup>c</sup> Ver. 20.  
36 saying, Let those men go. And <sup>c</sup> the keeper of the prison told  
this saying to Paul, <sup>c</sup> The magistrates <sup>38</sup> have sent to let you go:  
37 now therefore depart, and <sup>c</sup> go in peace. But Paul said unto <sup>c</sup> So ch. xv.  
them, They have beaten us openly <sup>39</sup> <sup>c</sup> uncondemned, being <sup>c</sup> See  
Romans,<sup>39</sup> and have cast <sup>c</sup> us into prison; and now do they <sup>c</sup> 33. See  
thrust us out privily? nay verily; but let them come themselves <sup>c</sup> 1 Sam. i. 17  
38 and fetch us out. And the serjeants<sup>37</sup> told these words unto <sup>c</sup> Ch. xxii. 25  
the magistrates:<sup>38</sup> and <sup>c</sup> they feared, when they heard that <sup>c</sup> Ch. xxii. 29  
39 they were Romans. And they came and besought them, and  
brought <sup>c</sup> them out, and <sup>c</sup> desired <sup>c</sup> them to depart out of the city. <sup>c</sup> See Mat.  
40 And they went out of the prison, and entered into <sup>c</sup> the house of <sup>c</sup> viii. 34.  
Lydia: and when they had seen <sup>c</sup> the brethren, they <sup>c</sup> were com- <sup>c</sup> Ver. 14.  
forted <sup>40</sup> them, and departed. <sup>c</sup> Ver. 2. See  
Jo. xxi. 23.  
<sup>c</sup> See ch. xv.  
32.

<sup>29</sup> being waked out of sleep      <sup>30</sup> omit 'out.'      <sup>31</sup> had fled  
<sup>32</sup> Some of the oldest authorities here, after the words 'the Lord Jesus,' omit  
'Christ.'      <sup>33</sup> thou and thy household      <sup>34</sup> omit 'and.'  
<sup>35</sup> According to most of the older authorities, 'with all that were in his house.'  
<sup>36</sup> the praetors      <sup>37</sup> better, 'the lictors.'      <sup>38</sup> in public  
<sup>39</sup> literally, 'men that are Romans.'      <sup>40</sup> or 'they exhorted them.'

*Paul revisits Lystra—He takes Timothy with him  
—He travels through Asia Minor, I—II.*

Ver. 1. And behold. The interjection 'behold' marks the importance which the writer of the 'Acts' attaches to the solemn adoption of Timothy by Paul. Wordsworth happily speaks of the incident 'as a gift from Heaven to Paul in the place of what he had lost in his separation from Barnabas and Mark.'

A certain disciple was there, named Timothy. It was during the first visit of Paul and Barnabas at Lystra that Timotheus must have

been converted. Paul speaks of him (1 Tim. i. 2) as 'his own son in the faith.' His mother's name was Eunice. She appears to have belonged to a Jewish family, either connected with those Babylonian Jews whom Antiochus settled in Phrygia three centuries before, or else brought into Lycaonia by some of those mercantile or other changes which affected the movements of so many Jewish households at this period (see Conybeare and Howson, 'Sketch of the Family,' *St. Paul*, chap. viii.). Her unfeigned faith, as also that of the grandmother Lois, is specially commented upon in 2 Tim. i. 5.

**His father was a Greek.** These mixed marriages, although very rare in Palestine, were common enough in remote districts like Lycaonia. It is not improbable, however, that the 'father' was a proselyte. The strict Jews regarded the offspring of such marriages as illegitimate.

**Ver. 2. Which was well reported of by the brethren who were at Lystra and Iconium.** Nothing seems to have been left out by Paul in his diligent inquiry into the character and fitness of his young associate. He had made himself, no doubt, thoroughly acquainted, in his first visit to Lystra, with the tone and life of the home of Lois and Eunice, and his heart—this we learn from the later correspondence—was drawn in a peculiar manner towards the boy convert. During the interval which elapsed between the first and second visit, the young Timothy had doubtless worked for the cause of Christ well and earnestly, and had won himself that 'good report' which Paul on inquiry about him received of the brethren. Some, too, of those mysterious prophetic utterances, not unfrequent in the first days of the Church's history, were spoken over the young disciple at his ordination; perhaps also a similar manifestation of the Spirit had taken place when he was first received into the congregation of the faithful. These strange precious sayings were among the gifts which encouraged the Christians in those early days of bitter trial. In Timothy's case they appear to have been far-seeing glances into the life-work of the future Christian leader.

**Ver. 3. Him would Paul have to go forth with him.** Silas filled the place of his old companion and brother-apostle, Barnabas, but as yet the loving apostle had no one to supply the vacancy caused by the desertion of the shrinking Mark.

Paul longed for the society and comfort of one who might in time become what he once hoped Mark was—a son in the faith. How well he chose is shown in the subsequent history of the devoted and brave Timothy.

**And circumcised him because of the Jews which were in those quarters.** In this act Paul was influenced entirely by considerations connected with the unconverted Jews in that and in other countries, who would quickly learn the particulars concerning the missionary apostle's trusted companion. The son of a Gentile father and of a Jewish mother, and himself uncircumcised, he would be in danger of being regarded as an apostate from the religion of his mother's ancestors. This would at once excite of itself a bitter animosity against Paul and his doctrines. This circumcising Timothy was not contrary to the decrees just passed by the Jerusalem Council, for these only declared circumcision was not to be forced on any one as though necessary to salvation. Paul recognised this great truth fully, as we see in his steady refusal to circumcise Titus (Gal. ii. 3). In the case of Titus, had he complied with the requirement to circumcise his companion, he would have given his assent to their doctrine that circumcision was necessary to salvation. In the case of Timothy, he assented to no doctrine; he simply carried out his words, 'To the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews' (1 Cor. ix. 20), knowing that Timothy uncircumcised would probably prove a grave hindrance to his future mission work in Jewish centres. Chrysostom writes of this act of Paul's as follows:—'Paul

circumcised Timothy in order to abolish circumcision, that is, in order to open an avenue for the gospel to the Jews;' and Luther, with his own bright ready words, thus comments on the transaction: 'It is just as if I should now go among the Jews in order to preach the gospel, and should find that they were weak. I might in that case be willing to submit to circumcision, and to eat or to abstain even as they do, but I would do all this in no other case and no longer than while I could be with them and labour for the gospel.'

**Ver. 4. The cities.** This would probably include Iconium and Pisidian Antioch.

**Ver. 5. So the churches were established in the faith.** So (*ὁὕτως*), as a consequence of the mediating tendency of the decrees of the Apostolic Council, a great bar to the acceptance of the gospel by the mass of Gentiles had been permanently removed.

The religion of Jesus might be accepted by a Roman or Asiatic without the necessary adoption of the Jewish rigorous and exclusive practices.

**Established in the faith, and increased in number daily.** On these words, which speak of a daily increase in the numbers of Christians, and at the same time of the faith in Jesus taking a firm and ever firmer root in the hearts of men and women, Bengel has one of his pithy telling comments, 'Rarum incrementum, numero simul et gradu.'

**Ver. 6. Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia.** Phrygia denoted at this time broken portions of a territory under the jurisdiction of three or four distinct governors. It roughly represented the great central space of Asia Minor. Its chief cities mentioned in the books of the New Testament are Colossæ, Laodiceæ, and Hierapolis. Josephus speaks of numerous Jews who had settled in Phrygia in the times of the Maccabees.

**And the region of Galatia.** This was a great midland district of Asia Minor inhabited by the descendants of those Gauls who invaded Greece and Asia in the third century B.C. Many of these seem to have settled and become mixed with the Greeks in the centre of Asia Minor. Galatia became a formal province of Rome A.D. 26. Its principal cities were Ancyra, the capital, Tavium, and Pessinus. It was in this missionary journey, accompanied by Silas and Timothy, that Paul laid the foundation of the flourishing Galatian Church. The grave sickness of the apostle, alluded to in such touching terms in the Galatian letter, must have attacked Paul during this sojourn in the country so briefly alluded to in this sixth verse.

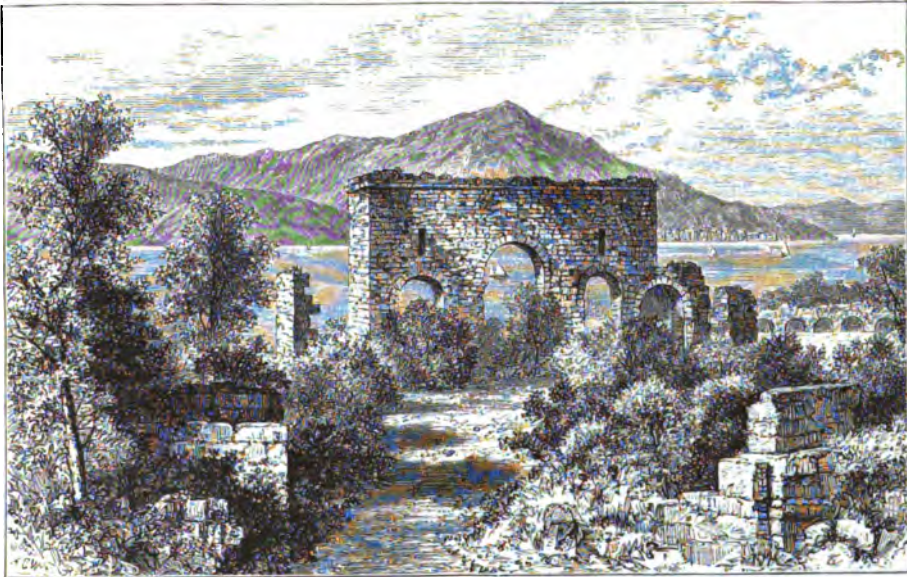
It has been often asked why the writer of the 'Acts' passes over thus abruptly the story of one of Paul's most successful missionary works. Various reasons have been suggested for this silence, such as—the absence of any record of this period; the definite plan of the 'Acts,' which was to recount the march of Christianity from Jerusalem to Rome—a plan which would exclude all relations of events outside the track marked out. One commentator suggests there were no Jewish residents in these districts, but the argument of the Galatian Epistle plainly contradicts this latter hypothesis. Whatever may have been the reason which determined the writer of the 'Acts' to omit the preaching to and founding of the Galatian Church, it is plain that the writer, under the inspiration of the Spirit, exercised his discretion concerning what acts of Paul and Peter's life he

wove into his history, which we clearly see only professes to recount but a very small portion of the 'Acts' of the more distinguished servants of Christ in the early days of the faith.

\* Were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia, Ver. 7. They assayed to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit suffered them not. Ver. 9. And a vision appeared to Paul in the night: There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia and help us. Among the supernatural signs which were vouchsafed to the first generation of believers, and, with very rare exceptions, to the first generation only,—to men and women, many of whom, be it remembered, had *seen* Jesus, and had had personal contact with Him,—must be reckoned those mysterious intimations of the will of the Holy Spirit which guided and directed the course of the infant Church. These intimations came apparently in varied forms—to the 'Twelve,'

in the form of the fiery tongues (ii. 1-12), when the house rocked as though under the influence of an earthquake, and the Spirit filled each one present in the praying assembly (iv. 31); when the Spirit spoke to Peter on the occasion of the conversion of Cornelius when he was in a trance (x. 16), and then when he was awake and musing on the vision (x. 19, 20); when Paul was on his Second Missionary Journey, on the three occasions discussed in this note; through a prophet (as in xxi. 10-14), etc. See also Paul's own words in xx. 23, where he refers to many such voices and heavenly intimations.

Underlying the brief relation contained in vers. 6-9, we can trace a wish of the apostle to preach his Master's Gospel in eastern lands in preference to the unknown West. Nothing was more natural than such a desire. For an Oriental to pass, on such a mission as Paul was bent, into far western lands, was indeed a difficult and hazardous under-



Alexandria Troas.

taking. The conditions under which hitherto he had carried out so successfully his arduous task, would have at once been changed; in the western countries across that broad Mediterranean or Ægean Sea which washed the land of his forefathers, he knew that he would have to face, in addition to the perils and obstacles which hitherto he had combated with success, new difficulties which would meet him, such as difference of climate, changed habits of life, another race, another language, ideas all strange to him, very formidable considerations to an oriental Jew like Paul, whose life-work was to make known a new religion. The eastern stranger naturally shrank at first from doing this in the far western countries across the sea.

Three distinct intimations from Heaven seem to have been necessary to show Paul in this juncture in his life what was the will of his Master. The first mentioned is in ver. 6, where Paul was forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in

'Asia,' Asia here signifying the western portion only of the great peninsula known now as 'Asia Minor.' It roughly included the ancient provinces of Lydia, Mysia, and Caria, and perhaps a portion of the broad region in the interior known as Phrygia.

Some such Divine intimation as we read of in Acts iv. 31 was probably given to the apostle and his companions, on which occasion we read, as they prayed, they were filled with the Holy Ghost.

The second supernatural sign of direction seems to have been a more definite one, and is alluded to in ver. 7 as the *Spirit of Jesus*, for that is the reading of the older authorities. We can form no conception respecting the nature of this special warning voice. The expression, 'Spirit of Jesus,' does not occur elsewhere in the New Testament. Ewald refers to Rev. xix. 10 as giving us a possible hint as to the manner in which the warning revelation was given to Paul.

The third voice from heaven to Paul came in the visions of the night, when by him there stood a 'man of Macedonia,' or more accurately rendered, 'a certain man of Macedonia.' Various explanations have been suggested respecting this supernatural visitant. Commentators have asked how Paul recognised the country of which his heavenly visitor was a representative? Some have suggested the peculiar dress, others the 'affecting words' spoken by him to Paul, 'Come over,' or better rendered, 'Cross over into Macedonia and help us.' Grotius suggests, not without reason, that 'the one who appeared to him was the representative or guardian angel of Macedonia, as the "Prince of Persia," in Dan. x.' It was no doubt an angel sent by the King of Heaven to directly guide His devoted servant into western countries.

**Ver. 8. Troas.** This famous place bearing the name of the ancient Troy was a seaport on the Hellespont, situated some four or five miles from the supposed site of the ancient city. It was built and named after the great Macedonian king 'Alexandria Troas' by two of his successors, Antigonus, who founded it, and Lysimachus, who completed the work and named it. By the Romans in the days of their greatest power it was regarded as New Troy, and was then one of the most important cities of Proconsular Asia. It is reported that Julius Cæsar intended to make it eventually the capital of the Roman Empire, both of the east and west. Some three centuries later, Constantine the Great, before he finally chose Byzantium as the site of his world-capital, had fixed upon Alexandria Troas as the future seat of his vast united empire. Gibbon writes: 'Though the undertaking was soon relinquished, the stately remains of unfinished walls and towers attracted the notice of all who sailed through the Hellespont.' In the days of Paul it had not attained to its utmost growth, but it possessed the privileges of a Roman colony, and the law had been assimilated already to that of Italy, these rights having been conferred upon it by Augustus.

**Ver. 10. Immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia.** In this verse the 'writer of the "Acts"' adopts the style of an eye-witness, and the apostolic memoirs for a time are written in the first person. 'We endeavoured;' from this it appears that Luke, the presumed author of these records, joined the missionary band first at Troas. Connecting the severe and dangerous illness of the apostle during the Galatian visit (ver. 6 and Gal. iv. 13-15), from which he had so recently recovered, the supposition that the 'beloved physician' associated himself with his great master at this juncture and watched over his health is not without foundation. Eusebius and Jerome, gathering their materials from very ancient traditions, both relate that Luke was a native of Antioch, in which city it is very probable he originally met Paul. At Philippi, however, Paul and Luke parted company, the latter apparently remaining behind. In the course of the apostle's Third Missionary Journey, the writer of these 'Acts,' Luke, again apparently at Philippi (Acts xx. 6) joined the missionary company; and from that period until the arrival of the prisoner Paul at Rome and the very close of the 'Acts,' he was evidently in close attendance upon him. In the last of the apostle's Epistles (the Second to Timothy), the old man Paul, writing in the full

expectation of that violent death which we have good reason to conclude followed very soon after the concluding words of that Epistle were penned, makes mention of this Luke, who with noble constancy and tried friendship stayed with him in that hour of extreme danger when others had left him or forsaken him (comp. 2 Tim. iv. 11: 'Only Luke is with me').

**Macedonia.** This country was now a Roman province. The Roman governor of Macedonia resided at Thessalonica, which was the general capital. There were, however, several important cities in this great province, such as Philippi, Amphipolis, Apollonia, and Berea, all visited by Paul.

**Assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the Gospel unto them.** After the direct intimation given by the appearance of the 'man of Macedonia' (ver. 9), Paul seems to have had no hesitation in coming to the conclusion that his life-work lay for a time, at least, in Europe.

**Ver. 11. We came with a straight course to Samothracia, or 'we ran with a straight course.'** The same word occurs again in the same sense in chap. xxi. 1. Luke, observes Hackett, observes almost a technical precision in the use of such terms. His account of the voyage to Rome shows a surprising familiarity with sea life.

*Paul and the Missionary Company at Philippi, 12-40.*

**Ver. 12. And from thence to Philippi.** This city was built on the site of the ancient village Krenides (the fountains), subsequently known as Datos, by Philip of Macedon, father of Alexander the Great, who named it after himself. Philippi became known in history as the scene of the decisive battle in which Brutus and Cassius were defeated by Augustus and Antony. The city has long disappeared, and its site is occupied by a small village named Filiba. Travellers speak of extensive ruins still marking the site of the old city.

**Which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia.** The Greek should here be rendered, 'Which is a city of Macedonia, the first of the district.' The words of the original here describe the geographical situation of Philippi, in relation to Paul's journey, as the first city of Macedonia at which he arrived, rather than as in the English Version the first politically 'chief city.' This latter signification cannot possibly be the true one, since Thessalonica was the provincial capital of Macedonia; and even Amphipolis would certainly have ranked before Philippi, if the old divisions of Macedonia into four parts still existed.

**And a colony.** A Roman colony was a miniature resemblance of the Imperial City,—a portion of Rome itself transplanted to the provinces. The inhabitants of this colony, being colonists and the descendants of colonists, were Roman citizens, and were still enrolled in one of the tribes, and possessed the privilege of voting at Rome. In these cities the Roman law was scrupulously observed, and the Latin language was used on their coins and inscriptions; they were governed by their own senate and magistrates, and not by the governor of the province, in which the colony happened to be situated. In certain of these colonies, the land on which the city stood was free from taxation. Such a city being a



colony had received the additional privilege of the 'Jus Italicum,' which assimilated the land to Italy. 'Ager Italicus immunis est, ager provincialis vectigalis est,' was a maxim of Roman law. Philippi and Alexandria Troas both possessed the high privilege of the 'Jus Italicum.'

Ver. 13. **By a river side.** The Gangas, a small river which flows close to the city. It is possible that the Jews worshipped there outside the gates of the city, because the military inhabitants (Philippi was never a commercial centre) would not allow them to worship within. A more probable reason, however, is the quiet and seclusion of the spot, which was especially chosen on account of its proximity to the river Gangas, which served for the ablutions connected with Jewish worship.

**Where prayer was wont to be made.** The Greek here should be translated, 'where was wont to be a place of prayer.' The word *προσευχή* (*proseucha*) is well known as the designation of a slight and temporary structure, frequently open to the sky, erected for the purposes of Jewish worship; in some cases the 'proseucha' seems simply a space or inclosure set apart for this solemn purpose. There was evidently but a very small colony of Jews resident at Philippi, owing no doubt to the fact that Philippi was rather a military than a commercial city. This accounts for there being no regular synagogue there; the 'proseucha,' or place of prayer by the river side, was the substitute for the ordinary Jewish meeting-house.

**Unto the women which resorted there.** These were very probably proselytes, not Jews. We have alluded to the fact that the number of Jews resident at Philippi was evidently very small. There may, however, have been a fair number of strangers resident, or sojourners for a time in the place, who, like Lydia of Thyatira, had learned to know the God of Israel in other cities.

Ver. 14. **Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira.** The city of Thyatira, on the confines of Lydia and Mysia, and one of the seven churches of Asia addressed in the Apocalypse, was celebrated in very early days for its purledyes and purplefabrics. Among the ruins of the city has been found an inscription relating to the guild of dyers, curiously testifying to the accuracy of even the unimportant details of the narrative (see Homer, *Iliad*, iv. 141). The business which brought this Lydia to Philippi was connected either with the sale of the colouring matter or more likely with the fabric already dyed. The purple colour so esteemed in the ancient world included many tints. Thyatira was originally a Macedonian colony founded by Alexander the Great. This would account for the residence of Lydia of Philippi in Macedonia in the inland Asian city of Thyatira. This city was famous in the old world for its dyes.

**Which worshipped God, heard (us).** This Lydia was a proselyte to Judaism from heathendom, and, with the other Jews of Philippi, was in the habit of attending the Jewish services of prayer, and praise, and instruction; and it was at one of these meetings for the worship of the God of Israel that this devout woman met Paul.

Ver. 15. **And when she was baptized, and her household.** This passage has been a little hastily quoted in support of 'infant baptism.' It is, however, quite uncertain whether, by the words 'and her household,' we are to understand her children, her slaves, or the working-people busied in her

industry connected with the purple dyes, or all these collectively. The practice, however, of infant baptism rests on surer ground than on the doubtful interpretation of any solitary text. We have direct allusions to 'the connections of Chloe' (1 Cor. i. 11); 'the household of Stephanas' (1 Cor. i. 16, xvi. 15); the church in 'the house of Aquila and Priscilla' (Rom. xvi. 5), etc. Is it credible, asks Bengel, that in so many families there was no child? But our Lord's action, when He laid His hands on the little child-heads (Matt. xix. 15), is of all warrants for this most ancient practice the most authoritative. As it has been well said, 'If infants were capable of spiritual blessings then, why, it may be well asked, should they be thought incapable now?'

**She besought (us), saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.** As a rule, St. Paul was reluctant to accept anything at the hands of his converts. He was surrounded by enemies, and he determined, at least, that the reproach of mercenary motives should never hinder his work for his Master. Her persistent entreaty perhaps, united with circumstances not known to us, induced St. Paul to deviate for a few days from his stern practice of refusing all kindly help, even from his most loving disciples (see his words, for instance, in Acts xx. 33, 34; 2 Cor. xii. 17, 18). There are other passages which also bear on this point. There were, of course, exceptions to this stern rule of his in the case of dear friends like Philemon, when he was in prison and in captivity (see Acts xxiv. 23, xxviii. 10).

Ver. 16. **As we went to prayer.** This should be rendered as in above verse, 'to the place of prayer.'

**A certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us.** This was a female slave possessed, to translate the Greek literally, 'with the spirit of a Pythoness.' Python was the spirit that traditionally guarded Delphi; it was slain by Apollo, and hence the god's name Pythias. To be possessed by the spirit of Pythoness was, in other words, to be possessed by a prophetic spirit or demon [*δαίμων πύθωνος*]. The name was subsequently given to any supposed soothsaying demon. Hesychius states that the term came to be used for a soothsaying ventriloquist among the ancients; the power of ventriloquism was often misused for the purposes of magic. Augustine even calls this girl 'ventriloqua femina.'

She was the slave of several joint-owners, who used her unhappy powers as a source of gain for themselves, and appear to have made large sums out of the exhibition of this grievously-afflicted soul.

Paul, when he met her, and had had several opportunities of observing her, recognised that she was one of those many unhappy beings who, in the first days of Christianity, were afflicted with grievous soul maladies. In the Gospels, these wretched ones, called demoniacs, now and again came in contact with Jesus, and at once recognising His power, the indwelling demons set free the soul they were tormenting. On the difficult question of what these demoniacs mentioned in the various books of the New Testament were, and whether they appeared only in that period when our Lord came in the flesh, see the weighty remarks of Archbishop Trench (*Miracles*, p. 162,



etc.), where the whole question of demoniacal possession is discussed at length.

Ver. 17. **And cried, saying, These men are servants of the most high God.** This testimony on the part of the evil spirit which possessed the unhappy slave-girl to the work and power of Christ and His servants, Paul and Silas, was by no means an unusual incident in the early days of Christianity. On several occasions, during the public ministry of the Lord Jesus, had these 'devils' borne loud and public testimony to His majesty and power; they had not only obeyed His voice, and freed their poor victims from their presence, but had, apparently of their own free will, borne witness to the veiled glory of the unknown Teacher, declaring now that He was the Holy One of God, and at another time the Son of God. It is observable that neither Christ nor His servants would ever accept this testimony from demons. On several occasions it is expressly recorded how the Master silenced these evil spirits in the hour of their acknowledgment of His majesty (see, for instance, Mark iii. 12; Luke iv. 34, 35, 41).

In like manner we read how Paul here, being grieved or troubled at the demon's perpetual acknowledgment of his Divine mission, in his Master's name silenced and expelled the spirit which had made its home in the poor slave of Philippi. A curious question, however, suggests itself, how it was Paul suffered the demon, after he was aware of its presence, so long to remain tormenting the girl? Bengel's explanation is singular. He concludes that the spirit did not belong to the worst order of spirits, otherwise Paul's indignation had been more quickly stirred up. But the true explanation seems to be, that there was something in the unhappy possessed one herself which prevented an earlier deliverance. There is but little doubt that these fearful soul-maladies which, in the days of Christ and His servant Paul, apparently raged in strangely-aggravated forms, were often due, in the first instance, to some terrible sin the hapless victim had indulged in. Demoniacal possession, however, seems, in some instances, to have been inherited; 'The sins of the father were visited on the children.' Is this heritage of evil an unknown thing among us now?

We know nothing of the circumstances of the possession of this slave of Philippi. There was something doubtless connected with it, which stayed Paul from an earlier exercise of his exorcising power. The words of the narrative seem to suggest that in the end the expulsion of the spirit was determined upon rather to silence the unwelcome testimony of a demon than to benefit the sufferer. In her case, the remittal of the punishment, if it were a punishment, possibly might have been not a blessing. It is, however, more than probable that, during 'the many days,' some of the solemn, beautiful words of Christ uttered or explained by Paul penetrated the poor darkened soul of this unhappy one, and awoke in her some sense of her lost and degraded condition. Then she perhaps cried for help, and received it. The whole question of 'possession by evil spirits,' insanity in its varied forms, epilepsy, and other kindred maladies, and their connection with sin, is as yet very little understood.

Ver. 18. **I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.** 'In My Name,'

said the Lord (Mark xvi. 17), 'shall they cast out devils.' It is noticeable how differently such acts as these were performed by the Master and His servants. Christ worked His miracles in His own sovereign power; the apostles worked theirs only in the name of Jesus.

Ver. 19. **And when her masters saw that the hope of their gains was gone.** It was simply revenge that prompted these covetous men to procure the apostles' arrest. When the evil spirit had once been exorcised, the power of ventriloquism and of uttering prophecies of future events was gone, and with it their hope of making money out of her.

**Drew them into the market-place unto the rulers.** That is, into the Forum, where the city authorities, who in a 'colony' like Philippi were styled prætors, held their court of justice.

Ver. 20. **To the magistrates.** The official title of these provincial officers was 'Duumviri'; but the title they preferred and usually assumed was the well-known Roman appellation of 'Prætor.'

**These men, being Jews, Ver. 21. Teach customs which are not lawful for us to observe, being Romans.** It was no very easy matter for these angry men to formulate their complaint against Paul and Silas, so they had recourse to the favourite accusation against men of a strange race and nationality—they charged them with attempting to stir up political disturbances. It was the old charge of the Jews against the Lord, and many times it was revived with success in the case of His chief followers. This false accusation procured for Paul his long Roman imprisonment, and in the end brought him to a bloody death. 'The accusation,' Calvin, quoted by Gloag, strikingly remarks, 'was craftily composed: on the one hand they boast of the name of Romans, than which no name was more honourable; on the other hand they excite hatred against the apostles and bring them into contempt by calling them Jews, which name was at that time infamous (they had lately been banished from Rome by the Emperor Claudius); for as regards religion the Romans had less affinity to the Jews than to any other nation.'

Judaism was a 'religio licita' sanctioned for the Jews, but the Roman policy by no means allowed this strange eastern faith to be propagated among the Roman peoples.

A severe law, if not in force at this time, certainly enacted shortly after, sternly forbade any one not a Jew undergoing the rite of circumcision. Any 'citizen of Rome' who was circumcised was liable to perpetual exile and the confiscation of his goods. A master who allowed his slaves to submit themselves to this rite exposed himself to a like penalty. The surgeon who circumcised was to be put to death. Even a Jew who caused his slaves who were not Jews to be circumcised was guilty of a capital offence. Gentle and tolerant though the policy of the Empire on the whole was to foreign religions, still if the votaries of a foreign religion showed themselves in earnest and wishful to convert others to their faith, at once the state regarded such men as public enemies.

It was this jealous feeling which the enemies of the Christians, fully conscious of, so often and so easily aroused against Christ and His great followers.

It should be observed how, in the words of the accusation here, the *Jew*, the member of an ob-

noxious sect, is placed in strong opposition to the Roman, the citizen of the mighty, victorious world empire.

Ver. 22. **And the multitude rose up against them.** The citizens and dwellers in that proud and exclusive Roman garrison town of Philippi as usual were at once roused by such an accusation.

The original cause of offence, the damage done to the productive property of the slave-owners, was quite lost sight of in the supposed public offence committed by the eastern strangers.

**And the magistrates rent off their clothes.** The prætors, without examining into the case, when they heard the nature of the charge, complying with the popular clamour, at once condemned the accused to a painful and shameful punishment before they were imprisoned and formally tried; acting as another and far higher Roman official had once acted when another and greater Captive stood before him accused of a state crime: 'From thenceforth Pilate sought to release Him. . . . When he heard *that saying*, he brought Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment-seat. . . . Then delivered he Him unto them to be crucified' (John xix. 12-16).

The magistrates in the case of Paul and Silas, as was the custom when criminals were ordered to be scourged, commanded the lictors—the executioners—violently to pull off the clothes of the condemned. The judicial form was, 'Summove lictor *despolia verbera*.'

**And commanded to beat them.** Ver. 23. **And when they had laid many stripes upon them.** Literally, 'to beat them with rods.' The custom was with the Romans to inflict the blows with rods upon the naked body. In his sad catalogue of the sufferings he had endured for his Master's dear sake (2 Cor. xi. 25), Paul relates how 'thrice he was beaten with rods.' This Philippi experience was one of the occasions. He endured here, we are told, *many* stripes, there being in the stern Roman practice no such merciful restriction as that existing in the law of Moses: 'Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one' (2 Cor. xi. 24); and see for the merciful restriction, Deut. xxv. 3. Hurried and excited by the popular tumult, the arrest, punishment, and subsequent rigorous imprisonment was ordered and carried out with such haste and passion that the plea of Roman citizenship urged with such force by the prisoners on the following day was not listened to even if made.

Ver. 24. **Thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks.** In a Roman prison there were usually three distinct parts—(1) the communiora, where the prisoners had light and fresh air; (2) the interiora, shut off by strong iron gates with bars and locks; (3) the tullianum or dungeon. The third was a place rather of execution or for one condemned to die. The prison in which Paul and Silas lay that eventful night at Philippi was probably a damp cold cell from which light was excluded.

The 'stocks' alluded to was an instrument of torture as well as confinement. This instrument was a heavy piece of wood with holes, into which the feet were placed in such a manner that they were stretched widely apart so as to cause the sufferer great pain.

Eusebius, *H. E.* vi. 39, writes of the noble Origen's sufferings when, under an iron collar and in the deepest recesses of the prison, for many

days he was stretched to the distance of four holes in the stocks (*ξύλον*, Lat. *nervus*).

Ver. 25. **And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God.** 'Peter sleeps in prison between the two soldiers; Paul and Silas sing in the stocks: they cannot raise their hands or bend their knees in prayer, but they can lift up their heart and voice to heaven. Such is the power of joy in the Holy Ghost' (Wordsworth). 'The limbs,' says Tertullian, 'do not feel the stocks when the heart is in heaven;' or as another writer has beautifully paraphrased Isa. lii. 7, 'The feet of those who publish peace are never more beautiful than when they are bound in fetters and in iron.' Wordsworth suggests the prisoners were singing one of the psalms which are entitled a prayer of David, the 17th or 86th.

The Greek verbs in this verse are in the imperfect, and the literal translation brings the scene that night more vividly before us, thus: 'Paul and Silas in prayer were singing hymns to God, and the prisoners' (in the outer prison) 'were listening to them' when the earthquake happened.

Ver. 26. **And suddenly there was a great earthquake.** Vain attempts have been made (for instance, by Baur and Zeller) to explain away the miraculous aspect of this event. But the simple words of the narrator can only be understood as an account of a miraculous interference on the part of the King ruling in heaven in behalf of His persecuted servants. The earthquake never loosed the prisoners' chains or opened those close-barred and chain-protected doors—the Divine power which commanded the earthquake loosed the chains and opened the barred-up doors.

Ver. 27. **And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had fled.** The jailor or governor of the prison seeing the doors open, naturally concluded that his prisoners, of whom no doubt a considerable number were under his charge, and some doubtless on capital charges, had fled; and then knowing that if such were the case a sure death awaited him under the stern Roman law, determined by self-murder to anticipate his doom. Howson remarks that Philippi is famous in the annals of suicide, and quotes the examples of the vast number of voluntary deaths after the great battle of Philippi had destroyed the hopes of the old republicans. Niebuhr relates how the majority of the proscribed who survived the battle of Philippi put an end to their own lives, as they despaired of being pardoned. Among these were Brutus and Cassius. Self-murder among the Romans in the first and second centuries of the Christian era was fearfully common. It was even approved of in Stoic philosophy. Many of the noblest of the Romans ended their days in this manner. It was, in fact, the common resort in trouble and in extreme danger, and was not unknown even in cases where satiety in all life's pleasures had induced the not uncommon feeling of utter weariness of living.

Ver. 28. **We are all here.** The prisoners, we are especially told, had been listening to the sweet, solemn Hebrew hymns of Paul and Silas when the earthquake and its accompanying marvels took place. Then, feeling that what had

happened was supernatural and in some measure connected with those eastern strangers whose voices they had been listening to that solemn night with such rapt attention, they made no effort to escape.

The words of Paul stayed the would-be suicide's hand.

Ver. 29. **Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas.** The Greek has *lights*, not a light. The prison governor wished to examine everything minutely. He at once fell at the feet of Paul and Silas, recognising they were under no mortal protection. He would now show all reverence to these messengers of an unearthly King.

Ver. 30. **And brought them out, and said.** From the inner prison where they were confined, probably into the court of the prison, and there he asked that celebrated question which has formed the text of so many an earnest and impassioned exhortation in such varied language during some seventeen or eighteen centuries.

**Sirs, what must I do to be saved?** Hackett, in an admirable and exhaustive note, thus discusses the difficulties which surround this famous question: 'The answer of the apostles in the next verse shows with what meaning the jailor proposed this question. It cannot refer to any fear of punishment from the magistrates; for he had now ascertained that the prisoners were all safe, and that he was in no danger from that source. Besides, had he felt exposed to any such danger, he must have known that Paul and Silas had no power to protect him; it would have been useless to come to them for assistance. The question in the other sense appears abrupt, it is true; but we are to remember that Luke has recorded only parts of the transaction. The unwritten history would perhaps justify some such view of the circumstances as this. The jailor is suddenly aroused from sleep by the noise of the earthquake; he sees the doors of the prison open; the thought instantly seizes him, the prisoners have fled. He knows the rigour of the Roman law, and is on the point of anticipating his doom by self-murder. But the friendly voice of Paul recalls his presence of mind. His thoughts take at once a new direction. He is aware that these men claim to be the servants of God, that they profess to teach the way of salvation. It would be nothing strange if during the several days or weeks that Paul and Silas had been at Philippi, he had heard the gospel from their own lips, had been one among those at the river-side or in the market whom they had warned of their danger, and urged to repent and lay hold of the mercy offered to them in the name of Christ. And now suddenly an event had taken place, which convinces him in a moment that the things which he has heard are realities; it was the last argument, perhaps, which he needed to give certainty to a mind already inquiring, hesitating. He comes trembling, therefore, before Paul and Silas, and asks them to tell him again more fully what he must do to be saved.'

Ver. 31. **And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.** The question of the jailor evidently implies that he was acquainted in some measure with the general purport of the preaching of Paul and his companions; indeed, his question seems to re-echo the monotonous burden of the poor demoniac girl's constant cry though the streets of

Philippi during the 'many days': '*These men are the servants of the most high God, and they proclaim to you the way of salvation*' (see ver. 17). The Roman official now in his great fear and consternation asks these men, who he feels *are servants of the most high God*, to tell him what he must do to find the way of salvation. They reply to him by telling him at once of One, even the Lord Jesus, in whom alone there is salvation. They demand from him, if he would indeed be saved, 'a faith of which His Person is the object—nothing more than faith, nothing less (*fide sola*, we must remember, was ever the watchword of the Apostle Paul);' and then the meaning of faith in Jesus was explained, and the gospel was preached to the jailor's family at midnight, while the prisoners were silent around, and the light was thrown on anxious faces and the dungeon wall; and this Roman, who believed from that hour with all his heart, *showed* his faith by rendering all the services to these persecuted servants which gratitude and adoring love to their Master could suggest. There is a brief but remarkable comment of Alford's on Paul's answer to the Philipian jailor's question as to how he should be saved: 'We may remark, in the face of all attempts to establish a development of St. Paul's doctrine according to mere external circumstances, that this reply, "Faith in Jesus only can save," was given *before* any one of his extant epistles was written.'

Ver. 32. **And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house.** This refers to the detailed instruction in the religion of Jesus which the apostles forthwith proceeded to give, explaining the practical meaning of 'faith in Jesus Christ.' It was something more than a bare assent to a great truth.

Ver. 33. **And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway.** Most likely in that rectangular reservoir or basin called the 'impluvium,' which was usually enclosed in the houses of that period. This 'tank' received the rain-water which flowed from a slightly inclined roof. Other expositors suggest that allusion is made to a swimming bath which was then no uncommon appurtenance to the public buildings. It is possible that such a bath existed in the prison of Philippi, which was a noted military centre. It is more likely, however, to have been an impluvium. Chrysostom comments thus:—'The jailor washed them, and he was washed himself. He washed them from their stripes, and he in his turn was washed from his sins.' This same Greek father conjectures that 'Stephanas' (1 Cor. i. 16, xvi. 15-17) was identical with this Philipian jailor.

Ver. 34. **And when he had brought them into his house.** Literally translated, 'brought them up,' that is, from the court in which they then were, *up* into his house which was 'above' the prison court.

**And rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.** This is better rendered 'and rejoiced, having believed in God.' This belief was the ground of his rejoicing. It could be paraphrased thus: 'He with all his house rejoiced that they all had been led to believe in God.' The jailor had been, of course, a Pagan until his meeting with Paul.

Ver. 35. **And when it was day, the magistrates sent the sergeants, saying, Let those men go.** There is but little doubt that, subsequently to the

tumultuous condemnation of Paul and Silas, the magistrates (Duumviri or Prætores) understood that the men who had been so hastily sentenced after the popular tumult were Roman citizens. It must be remembered the apostles had been resident at Philippi in the house of Lydia 'many days,' and therefore many persons in the city would know some details respecting them. When this fact came to the prætors' ears, their first care was to get quietly rid of these strangers. These Roman officials knew well the grave trouble which might ensue if it were known at Rome that a 'citizen' had been beaten publicly. The Porcian and Valerian laws exempted all citizens of Rome from stripes and torture. In a famous passage of one of Cicero's orations, the following statement occurs: - 'In the midst of the forum of Messina was a citizen of Rome scourged with rods. In the midst of his suffering, and the noise of the rods, the only word which was wrung from the unhappy man was, "I am a Roman citizen" (*In Verrem*). And again, in the same oration, he writes: 'It is a misdeed to bind a Roman citizen, a crime to scourge him; it is almost parricide that he should be executed.'

It was this knowledge that determined Paul on the following morning, when the magistrates (the prætors) sent to request they would leave Philippi in silence, to require on the part of the Roman authorities a public declaration of his and Silas' innocence. This acknowledgment was no doubt sought for in order to encourage the little company of converts who might otherwise, after the apostles' departure, have felt that they in some way were under the displeasure of Rome. Such a state of feeling might have hindered the further spread of the gospel.

Ver. 37. **Being Romans.** On the citizenship

of Paul, see the note on chap. xxii. 25, where the question is fully discussed. It is observable that Paul, who five times (2 Cor. xi. 24) submitted to be scourged by his own countrymen, never there pleaded his rights as a Roman citizen. To the Jews he became as a Jew, strictly observing (as we shall see) their ceremonial customs, and submitting to their law.

Ver. 38. **And the serjeants.** Here, as in ver. 35, literally, rod-bearers, lictors, officials who attended upon the magistrates and carried out their orders. In a 'colony' these officers carried staves, not as in Rome, fasces.

**And they feared.** Hackett quotes from Lucian a case of false imprisonment, in which the governor of a province not only acknowledged his error, but paid a large sum of money to those whom he had injured, in order to bribe them to be silent.

Ver. 40. **And they went out of the prison, and entered into the house of Lydia.** Even after the magistrates had paid them the respect of an official visit, and had expressed their regrets, the apostles did not at once comply with their request, that in order to avoid any more popular tumult they should leave the place. We find them proceeding, in the first instance, to the home of Lydia, their hostess; there they met the believers in Jesus once more, and for the last time spoke to them the words of life. Timothy and Luke seem to have stayed behind at Philippi when Paul and Silas left.

Some have supposed Luke remained at Philippi until Paul revisited Philippi on his second visit to Macedonia in the course of his Third Missionary Journey. After Paul left Philippi, the writer relates the story of his work as an historian in the third person until the second meeting, after which Luke writes as an eye-witness till the close of the Book of the 'Acts.'

## CHAPTER XVII.

### *The Churches of Thessalonica and Berea are founded—Paul visits Athens.*

- 1 **N**OW when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to <sup>a</sup>Thessalonica, where was a  
 2 synagogue of the Jews: And Paul, <sup>b</sup>as his manner was, went  
 in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them  
 3 'out' of the scriptures, <sup>c</sup>Opening and alleging, that 'Christ  
 must needs have suffered, and <sup>d</sup>risen again from the dead;  
 4 and that this <sup>e</sup>Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ. <sup>f</sup>And  
 some of them believed,<sup>g</sup> and consorted with Paul and <sup>h</sup>Silas;  
 and of the <sup>i</sup>devout <sup>j</sup>Greeks a great multitude, and of <sup>k</sup>the  
 5 chief women not a few. But <sup>l</sup>the Jews which believed not,<sup>m</sup>  
<sup>n</sup>moved with envy, took unto *them* certain <sup>o</sup>lewd <sup>p</sup>fellows of the

<sup>a</sup> See Jo. xx. 9. <sup>b</sup> Ch. xviii. 5, 28. Cp. ch. ix. 22. <sup>c</sup> See ch. xxviii. 24. <sup>d</sup> See ch. xv. 34. <sup>e</sup> Ver. 17. See ch. xiii. 43.  
<sup>f</sup> See Jo. xii. 20. <sup>g</sup> See Mk. v. 21. <sup>h</sup> Ch. xiv. 2 (Gk.). <sup>i</sup> Ch. vii. 9; 1 Cor. xiii. 4. <sup>j</sup> See Judg. ix. 4.

<sup>1</sup> literally, 'from the Scriptures.'

<sup>2</sup> were persuaded

<sup>3</sup> The more ancient authorities omit the words 'which believed not;' render, 'But the Jews being moved with envy, etc.'

<sup>4</sup> better, 'certain bad men.'

- basers sort, and gathered a company,<sup>5</sup> and set all<sup>6</sup> the city on an uproar, and assaulted the house of<sup>7</sup> Jason, and sought to  
 6 bring them out to the people. And when they found them not, they drew Jason and certain<sup>8</sup> brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying, 'These that have<sup>9</sup> turned<sup>10</sup> the world upside  
 7 down are come hither also; Whom Jason hath<sup>11</sup> received: and these all do contrary to the<sup>12</sup> decrees of Cæsar, saying that  
 8 there is another king, *one* Jesus. And they troubled the people and the rulers of the city, when they heard these *things*. And  
 9 when they had taken security of Jason, and *of* the other,<sup>13</sup> they let them go.  
 10 And<sup>14</sup> the brethren immediately<sup>15</sup> sent away Paul and<sup>16</sup> Silas by night unto Berea: who coming *thither*<sup>17</sup> went into the syna-  
 11 gogue of the Jews. These were more noble than those in<sup>18</sup> 'Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and<sup>19</sup> searched the scriptures daily, whether those  
 12 *things* were so. Therefore many of them believed; also of<sup>20</sup> 'honourable<sup>21</sup> women which were Greeks, and of men, not a  
 13 few. But when the Jews of Thessalonica had knowledge that the word of God was preached of Paul at<sup>22</sup> Berea, they came  
 14 thither also, and<sup>23</sup> stirred up<sup>24</sup> the people. And then immediately the brethren<sup>25</sup> sent away Paul to go<sup>26</sup> as *it were* to the  
 15 sea: but<sup>27</sup> Silas and<sup>28</sup> Timotheus<sup>29</sup> abode there still. And they that<sup>30</sup> conducted Paul brought him unto<sup>31</sup> Athens: and<sup>32</sup> receiving a commandment unto<sup>33</sup> Silas and<sup>34</sup> Timotheus<sup>35</sup> for to come to him with all speed, they departed.  
 16 Now while Paul waited for them at<sup>36</sup> Athens, his spirit was stirred in him, when he saw the city wholly given to idolatry.<sup>37</sup>  
 17 Therefore<sup>38</sup> he<sup>39</sup> disputed he<sup>40</sup> in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the<sup>41</sup> devout *persons*, and in the market daily with them  
 18 that met with *him*. Then certain philosophers<sup>42</sup> of the Epicureans, and of the Stoics, encountered him. And some said, What will this babbler say? other *some*, He seemeth to be a  
 19 setter forth of strange gods: because<sup>43</sup> he preached unto them Jesus, and<sup>44</sup> the resurrection. And they took him, and brought him unto Areopagus,<sup>45</sup> saying, May we know what this<sup>46</sup> new  
 20 doctrine, whereof thou speakest, *is*? For thou bringest certain<sup>47</sup> strange *things* to our ears: we would know therefore what  
 21 these *things* mean. (For all the Athenians and<sup>48</sup> strangers which were there<sup>49</sup> spent their time in nothing else, but *either*

<sup>5</sup> or 'raising a disturbance.'<sup>6</sup> omit 'all.'<sup>7</sup> and of the rest<sup>8</sup> also of Greek women of rank<sup>9</sup> Some of the older authorities add 'and troubling; render then, 'stirring up and troubling.'<sup>10</sup> or 'as far as to the sea.'<sup>11</sup> or 'Timothy.'<sup>12</sup> as far as Athens<sup>13</sup> full of idols<sup>14</sup> better rendered, 'of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers.'<sup>15</sup> or 'Hill of Ares (Mars).'<sup>16</sup> staving there

Rom. xvi. 21.

Vers. 10, 14.  
See Jo. xxi.23.  
See ch. xvi.

20.

Ch. xxi. 38;

Gal. v. 12 in

the Gk. So

ch. xxiv. 5.

Ver. 31. See

Mat. xxiv.

14.

See Lu. x. 38.

See Lu. iii. 1.

So Lu. xxiii.

2; Jo. xviii.

33, 36, 37.

xix. 12.

So ch. ix. 25;

ver. 14. See

Mat. x. 23.

29.

Ch. xiii. 50.

So Mk. xv.

43.

b Ver. 10;

ch. xx. 4.

c 2 Thes. ii. 2

(Gk.).

d Ver. 10.

e See ch. xv.

34.

f See ch. xvi.

1.

g See ch. xv. 3.

h Vers. 16, 22;

ch. xviii. 1;

1 Thes. iii. 1.

i Ch. xviii. 5.

k Ver. 15.

l Ver. 2 (Gk.);

ch. xviii. 4.

m (Gk.), xix.

8, 9, xx. 7, 9

(Gk.), xxiv.

12.

n Vers. 2, 10.

o Ver. 4.

p See ch. v. 42.

q Ch. iv. 2.

r Mk. i. 27.

s Heb. xiii

9.

t Pet. iv. 4.

12.

u Ch. ii. 10.





*From photograph.*

ATHENS.



22 to tell or to hear some new *thing*.) Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars' hill,<sup>17</sup> and said,

Ye men of <sup>4</sup> Athens, I perceive that in all *things* ye are too  
 23 'superstitious.<sup>18</sup> For as I passed by, and beheld your devo-  
 tions,<sup>19</sup> I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UN-  
 KNOWN GOD.<sup>20</sup> Whom<sup>21</sup> therefore ye ignorantly worship,  
 24 "him<sup>21</sup> declare I unto you. "God that made the world and all  
*things* therein, seeing that he is "Lord of heaven and earth,  
 25 "dwelleth not in temples "made with hands; Neither is wor-  
 shipped with men's<sup>22</sup> hands, "as though he needed any *thing*,  
 26 seeing he<sup>23</sup> giveth to all "life, and breath, and all *things*; And  
 "hath made of one blood<sup>24</sup> all nations of men for to dwell on  
 all the face of the earth, and hath "determined the times before  
 27 appointed, and "the bounds of their habitation; "That *they*  
 should seek the Lord,<sup>25</sup> if haply they might feel after him, and  
 28 find *him*, "though he be not far from every one of us: For "in  
 him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of  
 "your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.  
 29 "Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, "we ought  
 not to think that the Godhead<sup>26</sup> is like unto gold, or silver, or  
 30 stone, graven by art and man's device. And the times of *this*  
 ignorance God "winked at; "but "now commandeth all men  
 31 every where to repent: Because he hath appointed "a day, in  
 the which "he will judge "the world in righteousness by *that*  
 man whom he hath "ordained; *whereof* he hath given assur-  
 ance unto all *men*, in that "he hath raised him from the dead.  
 32 And when they heard of "the resurrection of the dead,  
 some mocked: and others said, "We will hear thee again  
 33 of this *matter*. So Paul departed from among them.  
 34 Howbeit certain men clave unto him, and believed: among  
 the which *was* Dionysius the "Areopagite, and a woman named  
 Damaris, and others with them.

<sup>17</sup> the Areopagus, or Hill of Ares (Mars)

<sup>18</sup> rather, 'the object of your worship.'

<sup>19</sup> more accurately, 'to an unknown God.'

<sup>20</sup> Several of the most ancient authorities have neuter forms here; the rendering then would be, 'What therefore ye ignorantly worship, this declare I unto you.'

<sup>21</sup> The older authorities read 'by human hands; the sentence would run thus: 'neither is ministered to by human hands.'

<sup>22</sup> better, 'seeing He Himself.'

<sup>23</sup> Some, but not all the older authorities, omit 'blood.'

<sup>24</sup> The older authorities here, instead of 'the Lord,' read 'God.'

<sup>25</sup> better, 'what is Divine.'

<sup>18</sup> or better, 'very devotional.'

<sup>17</sup> So ch. xxv.

<sup>18</sup> Ver. 3 (Gk.)

<sup>19</sup> See ch. xiv.

<sup>20</sup> Mat. xi. 25.

<sup>21</sup> Ch. vii. 48.

<sup>22</sup> See Mk. xiv.

<sup>23</sup> Pa. i. 8-12.

<sup>24</sup> Cp. Job xxii.

<sup>25</sup> See Gen. ii.

<sup>26</sup> Num. xvi.

<sup>27</sup> So

<sup>28</sup> Job xxvii. 3.

<sup>29</sup> See Mal. ii.

<sup>30</sup> Ver. 31

(Gk.). See

Lu. xxii. 22.

<sup>31</sup> Deut. xxxii.

<sup>32</sup> Pa. lxxiv.

<sup>33</sup> Cp. ch. xv. 17.

<sup>34</sup> So ch. xiv. 17.

<sup>35</sup> See Job xii.

<sup>36</sup> So Tit. i. 12.

<sup>37</sup> Cp. 1 Cor.

<sup>38</sup> Cp. Heb.

<sup>39</sup> Isa. xl. 18.

<sup>40</sup> xlv. 5.

<sup>41</sup> Cp. Rom. iii.

<sup>42</sup> Eph. iv.

<sup>43</sup> 1 Pet. i.

<sup>44</sup> See

ch. xiv. 16.

<sup>45</sup> Lu. xxiv. 47.

<sup>46</sup> ch. xxvi. 20.

<sup>47</sup> So Tit. ii. 11.

<sup>48</sup> 1 Pet.

<sup>49</sup> See Rom. ii.

<sup>50</sup> Jo. v. 22.

<sup>51</sup> ch. x. 42.

<sup>52</sup> Rom. ii. 16.

<sup>53</sup> So ch. xxiv.

<sup>54</sup> 25;

<sup>55</sup> Rom. xiv. 10;

<sup>56</sup> 1 Cor. v. 10;

<sup>57</sup> Heb. vi. 2.

<sup>58</sup> Cp. Ps. lxxvii.

<sup>59</sup> See ver. 6.

<sup>60</sup> See ch. ii. 24.

<sup>61</sup> So Jo. xvi.

<sup>62</sup> Jo. xi.

<sup>63</sup> Ver. 31.

<sup>64</sup> Cp. ver. 18;

<sup>65</sup> Heb. vi. 2.

<sup>66</sup> So ch. xxiv.

<sup>67</sup> 25.

<sup>68</sup> Vers. 19, 22.

Paul at Thessalonica and Berea, 1-14.

Ver. 1. Through Amphipolis and Apollonia. From Philippi to Amphipolis, some thirty-three miles along the great Egnatian Way, which was a continuation of the Appian Way. Amphipolis

was an important military station in the days of Paul; its former name was 'The Nine Ways,' from the number of roads which met at this point. The missionary apostle appears to have merely passed through this place and also Apollonia, an unimportant town thirty miles from Amphipolis,



and only to have preached at the great maritime city of Thessalonica, which he reached probably on the third day after his departure from Philippi. Thessalonica is thirty-seven miles from Apollonia.

**They came to Thessalonica.** From very early times this city was famed as a commercial centre. Under its old name, Therma, we read of it in Herodotus and Thucydides. It was rebuilt by Cassander, and renamed after his wife Thessalonica, sister to Alexander the Great. This princess received her name to commemorate a victory won by her father, Philip of Macedon, on the day he received the news of her birth. In the Middle Ages it is celebrated in German poetry under the name of Salneck, an abbreviation of Thessalonica which, with a very slight change, has remained to the present day. Before the building of Constantinople, it was really the capital of Greece and Illyricum, and even now Saloniki is the second city of European Turkey. In the mediæval chronicles it is known as the 'orthodox city,' and during those dark ages when the Barbarians were fast spreading over the provinces of the decaying Empire, this brave merchant city held its own and contributed greatly to the spread of Christianity among the swarms of invading Goths and Slaves who were gradually making permanent settlements in the neighbouring districts. Saloniki, though now a Turkish city, among its 70,000 inhabitants reckons 35,000 Jews and 10,000 Christians! The chief trade is in the hands of its Jewish population, and thirty-six synagogues are said to exist at the present time.

**Where was a synagogue of the Jews.** The more literal translation would be here 'the synagogue,' signifying that the *chief*, not the only synagogue of the district, was placed in this great sea city.

**Ver. 2. And Paul, as his manner was.** Cf. Luke iv. 16. Paul imitates his loved Master, who, we read, 'as His custom was, went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day.'

Then as now, the great trading centre of Thessalonica attracted vast numbers of Jews. The synagogue here seems to have been the headquarters of the 'religion' for all Macedonia and the adjacent district.

**Three Sabbath days.** Paul's invariable custom was in the first instance to address himself to Jews, and only after he had given his message to the chosen people to turn to the Gentile inhabitants of the place. These 'three Sabbath days' by no means represent the length of the apostle's stay at Thessalonica. These three weeks were doubtless devoted to his fellow-countrymen, but Paul must have resided in the great city much longer. We know he left behind him the nucleus of a great and flourishing Christian community, chiefly composed of Gentile converts. We read also how, although Paul worked with his own hands for his support while preaching and teaching there, Philippi in token of its loving friendship twice sent to his necessities (Phil. iv. 16); and as the two cities were some hundred miles apart, this would imply a lengthened sojourn on the part of the apostle at Thessalonica.

**Out of the Scriptures.** When Paul spoke of Jesus to the Jews, it is noticeable he never appealed to His miracles, but always referred them to their own Scriptures, every letter of which they valued as Divine; and then, after calling their attention to this or that well-known and often read

type or prophecy of Messiah, he would turn to the life and death of Jesus, every detail of which at least the well instructed of the foreign synagogue well knew, and would ask them, Was not *this One* after all the Messiah, the Christ?

**Ver. 3. Opening and alleging.** Better, 'opening and setting forth.' Opening—that is, expounding, unfolding their sense. Bengel well expands these words: 'Ut si quis nucleum, fracto cortice, et recludat et exemptum ponat in medio.'

Paul *opened* their Scriptures, and then *showed* them how they contained two great truths—the first, that these Scriptures declare the promised Messiah must suffer death and then rise again; and the second, that these Scriptures point unmistakably to Jesus of Nazareth, who, by His life, death, actions, words, works, sufferings, sorrows, even by His very rejection at the hands of the rulers, was unmistakably the One alluded to in a hundred passages in the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms.

**Is Christ.** Better, 'is the Christ,' or the Messiah.

**Ver. 4. And some of them believed.** The work of Paul in the synagogue was not unsuccessful. The account of the 'converted' in this verse probably relates to the Jews and proselytes and devout Gentiles who worshipped with the Jews. In 1 Thess. i. 9, Paul alludes to many members of the church in Thessalonica who had evidently been idolaters. This work among the idolaters no doubt took place after the three Sabbaths of ver. 2, and before the events related in connection with Jason, vers. 5-10.

**The devout Greeks.** Some of these were proselytes, others religious Gentiles, who, without conforming to all the Jewish rites and customs, worshipped with the Jews in the synagogue services.

**Of the chief women.** These were the wives and daughters of the principal merchants and influential men of Thessalonica, who were attached as proselytes or simply as religious God-fearing men to the Jewish worship.

**Ver. 5. But the Jews which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lowd fellows of the baser sort.** The words 'which believed not' do not occur in the older Greek MSS. They were no doubt inserted as an explanation after the statement of ver. 4. It was only the unbelieving Jews who tried to compass the destruction of Paul. 'Certain lowd fellows,' etc., is better rendered, 'Some bad men of the rabble.'

The question has been asked why the Jews sought such coadjutors out of Judæa. They were strangers; and to effect such a purpose as that related here, they needed the help of some of the native inhabitants. The word rendered here 'of the rabble' (*ἀσπαίοντες*) is a word not unfrequent in classical Greek. In old Rome they were termed 'subrostrani.' Plautus would term them 'subbasilicani.' The modern word equivalent would be 'canaille.' The loungers who have no definite business, who crowd the market-place and other busy resorts, ready for any piece of business however rough and cruel, are the class here spoken of.

**The house of Jason.** It has been suggested with some probability that this Jason was an Hellenistic Jew, whose name Jesus or Joshua had been changed into the Greek form 'Jason' (see 1

Macc. viii. 17 ; 2 Macc. xi. 23). He was possibly a relative of Paul's (see Rom. xvi. 21). The apostle and Silas very likely lodged in the house of Jason during their stay at Thessalonica.

Ver. 6. Unto the rulers of the city. Literally, 'unto the politarchs.' Thessalonica was a 'free city' (*urbs libera*). This privilege of 'freedom' was only bestowed by Rome upon certain favoured cities. In this case it was a reward for the side the city had taken when Augustus and Antony had warred with Brutus and Cassius. Athens also possessed this 'freedom' in memory of her ancient greatness.

A 'free city' was self-governed. The provincial governor possessed within its walls and circuit no authority. The power of life and death, for instance, so jealously withheld from the Jerusalem Jews, belonged to the local magistrates of a 'free

city.' No Roman garrison, no Roman ensigns, were seen in the streets. At Thessalonica we find an assembly of the people, and magistrates named politarchs. An inscription still exists over an ancient arch at Thessalonica of a date considerably older than the first century of our era. This inscription contains the names of seven of the Thessalonian magistrates, whom it calls 'politarchs,' thus confirming in a strange and striking manner the accuracy of the writer of the 'Acts' in using this most rare word in describing the rulers of this city.

These that have turned the world upside down. These strange words, Alford remarks, presuppose some rumour of Christianity and its spread having before reached the inhabitants of Thessalonica.

Ver. 7. These all do contrary to the decrees



Main Street, Thessalonica.

of Cæsar. It is observable that the complaint did not touch the real ground of discontent, viz. the supposed injury which the teaching of Paul would do to their religion.

Such a charge would never have been listened to ; it would have been treated by these politarchs of Thessalonica just as a similar accusation was disposed of by Gallio the proconsul of Achaia (Acts xviii. 14-16). The Jews here charged Paul and his companion with a political offence of a like nature to the crime of which Jesus was accused before Pilate. It was a vague but not uncommon accusation in those days which charged an obnoxious person with treason against Cæsar. The decrees here referred to were the Julian 'Leges Majestatis.' The accusation, as we shall see in the next clause, seems to have been based upon certain often-recurring words used by Paul in his preaching at Thessalonica respecting the *kingdom*

of Christ. This appears again and again in his two epistles to this church.

Saying that there is another king, one Jesus. The royal state of Christ's second advent seems to have been a favourite topic with Paul in his preaching in this city. We gather this from the two epistles to the church of Thessalonica, in which doubtless the salient points of the oral teaching of the great apostle were briefly reviewed. Compare, among many passages, such statements as are found in 1 Thess. ii. 12 ; 2 Thess. i. 5. Gloag suggests that the title 'Lord' so frequently given by Christians to their great Master may have given occasion to the charge, so often apparently repeated, that the disciples of Christ were really asserting His claim to the kingly office.

The title 'king' (*βασιλεύς*) was applied by *Greeks* to the Roman emperor. No *Latin*, however, termed the Cæsar *rex*.

Ver. 8. And they troubled the people and the rulers of the city, when they heard these things. It must be remembered that just at this time the Jews, and more particularly the Jewish Christians, were looked upon with extreme dislike and suspicion by the officials of the Empire. From Rome they had been even temporarily banished, owing to an uproar, possibly between the followers of Jesus and the Jews, very likely occasioned by the jealousy of the Jews, as on the present occasion at Thessalonica. Suetonius tells us strangely of this Roman disturbance, and connects it with one 'Chrestus,' no doubt Christ: 'Judæos impulsore Chresto assidue tumultuantes Roma expulit' (Suetonius, *Claud.* 25). The provincial rulers, desirous to show their loyalty to the Emperor Claudius, and in no wise to compromise the cherished privileges of their city, which they knew were only held during the pleasure of the central authorities at Rome, were naturally troubled and anxious. It was this feeling of insecurity which led to Paul's withdrawal related ver. 10.

Ver. 9. And when they had taken security of Jason, and of the other. Better, 'of Jason and of the rest,' 'the rest' including those other believers who had been arrested at the time of the tumult. The 'security' was most probably a sum of money deposited by Jason, who appears to have been a person of substance, as were very likely some of

words to the Jews of Thessalonica, translating thus: 'These were the more noble of the Thessalonians who received the word,' intimating that the chief men of Thessalonica had joined the Christian brotherhood; but the more probable explanation is that the Berean Jews were of a nobler spirit, less narrowed by national prejudices than their brethren of the larger city. It is worthy of remark that, even in the brief summary of Paul's work these 'Acts' contain, we can see that the great teacher neither expected nor desired that men should be converted to his Master's creed without first carefully examining it, and the proofs upon which it was based. The genuine, honest spirit of inquiry is ever allied to true gospel teaching. The 'nobility of soul' which Paul's chronicler so highly praised in the men of Berea consisted not merely in their readiness of mind to receive the word, but also in that patient loving spirit of inquiry which led them daily to read the Scriptures to see whether those things—Paul told them of—were so.

Ver. 12. Also of honourable women which were Greeks, and of men not a few. To these Jews who accepted the doctrines preached by Paul were added a number of Gentiles,—some, of course, proselytes, but most probably idolaters for the most part; and these, the writer of the 'Acts' tells us, were men and women of the highest rank among the Greek citizens.

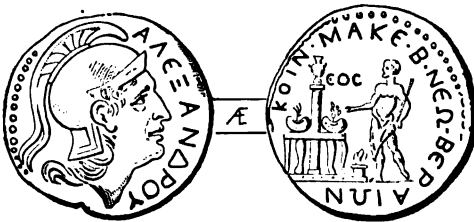
Ver. 13. They came thither also, and stirred up the people. These short notices in the 'Acts' of the steady, unwearied pursuit of Paul from city to city give us a hint at least of that restless bitter hatred with which this great Gentile apostle was regarded by the majority of his countrymen—a hate the depth and intensity of which the critical studies of this age is only beginning to fathom.

Ver. 14. To go as it were to the sea. The accurate translation of the Greek *eis tēn thalassan* is simply 'as far as to the sea'; the English Version would seem to suggest a feint on the part of Paul and his friends; the Greek *eis* used before a preposition simply denotes the definite intention of the direction 'to the sea.' Alford gives some good examples of their use in classical Greek.

But Silas and Timotheus abode there still. Silas appears up to this time never to have left his great fellow-missionary, but Timothy was left behind at Philippi; although not mentioned as with Paul at Thessalonica, it is almost certain that he was with his master during a portion at least of the first memorable visit. He appears to have been intimately connected with the Christian congregation there, and in both the epistles of Paul to the church of Thessalonica, he is joined in the greeting with Silas and Paul. It has been suggested that Timothy joined Paul again at Thessalonica, bringing with him the contributions and help from the Philippian Christians.

#### Paul at Athens, 15-34.

Ver. 15. Brought him unto Athens. The once famous centre of Greek thought and culture, long the dominant power among the varied states of which ancient Greece was made up, whose name and influence at one time was all-powerful in so many rich and flourishing cities round the Mediterranean coast, in Asia as well as in Europe, had become after many vicissitudes a simple provincial city of the province of Achaia in the Empire. Rome, in memory of its past splendid history, had accorded it the privileges above discussed (ver. 6)



Coin of Berea.

the others; for these converts among the early Christians in these great Grecian cities were by no means all drawn from the poorer classes. The purpose of this security was to assure the magistrates that there should be nothing done by these eastern strangers contrary to the decrees of Caesar.

Ver. 10. And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night. All parties in the city were evidently uneasy, although quiet had been restored. The magistrates, dreading a fresh outbreak on the part of these suspected Orientals, and the Christian community knowing the bitter and sleepless hostility of the Jews, determined it was best for the peace and wellbeing of the growing community of believers in Jesus that the great and hated teacher should, for a time at least, absent himself.

Berea. A city of no great fame in history, about sixty miles from Thessalonica. It was a favourite dwelling-place for the Jews. Its modern name is Verria, or Kara-Verria, a corruption of the old appellation, and contains still about 18,000 inhabitants. Paul seems to have had marked success there among the Jewish population; but, strange to say, the name of Berea is never mentioned by him in any of his epistles.

Ver. 11. These were more noble than those in Thessalonica. Certain expositors of great name, as, for instance, Calvin and Luther, apply these

of 'a free city' (*urbis libera*). The general appearance of Athens in the time of Paul must still have been imposing; but long and desolating wars had passed over Athens and Attica. Its old fortifications were in ruins; its commerce had deserted its port; its streets were comparatively empty. There was no life or energy left among her people. Athens, in the days of Paul, preserved nothing but her undying memories and the stately buildings—almost, it would seem, imperishable—which she had erected in the days of her splendour. The 'long walls' so well known in history, which once made the busy commercial Piræus and Athens one great city, were already in ruins; but the great monuments which the skill and wealth of the old Athenian people had built remained very much as in old times. One fact seems to have made a strange impression upon St. Paul coming from Berea and its bright life and the busy commerce of wealthy Thessalonica.

In this quiet still city of memories, wherever he turned he beheld statues of deified heroes, and temples, and sanctuaries of gods. Every god in Olympus, we read, found a place in the 'Agora.' The very public buildings in that city of the dead were sanctuaries. The record house was a temple of the mother of the gods. The council house held statues of Apollo and Jupiter, with an altar of Vesta. The theatre at the base of the Acropolis was consecrated to Bacchus, where the very marble seats were inscribed each with the official name of the priest to whom it was assigned. In truth, this Athens which Paul visited seemed a city of temples whose citizens were the priests. Never, in the long and eventful story of the City of the Violet Crown, as Aristophanes termed it, was Athens so empty of all life as it was at that particular juncture. Its ancient splendour and opulence had completely disappeared after Scylla had swept away its wealth and destroyed the last remains of its old independence. Athens fell lower and lower, owing the scanty remains of privileges to a sentiment of pity for her in her deep degradation.

The great schools which, after she had lost her power in some way, maintained her reputation in the days of Augustus and his immediate successors were rivalled, if not surpassed, by those of Marseilles, Rhodes, and Rome, and other centres of learning and thought. The revival of Athens as the great seat of culture in the Empire, only dates from the time of Nerva. Athens was in the period of its greatest depression when Paul well describes his impression of the famous city: Lifeless, quiet, without trade, a city neither of merchants nor soldiers, full of lifeless objects of adoration, temples and statues, altars and shrines, he saw the city wholly given up to idolatry.

Ver. 16. His spirit was stirred up in him. The whole aspect of Athens was strangely repugnant to Paul; the great cities he was acquainted with, such as Antioch in the east and Thessalonica in the west, were busy commercial centres, full of life and energy, despising rather, while at the same time practising, idolatry. Indifferentism was what he had been combating, rather than anything like a fervid spirit of idolatry; but here he seemed in a different atmosphere, here idolatry was closely bound up with all the pleasures and the occupations of the citizen, was linked indissolubly with those memories of the past of which the people of Athens were so proud.

The comment of Renan, in the course of a splendid and lifelike picture of the Athens of the first century, on Paul's indignation at the idolatry of Athens, is singular:—'Ah belles et chastes images, vrais dieux et vraies Déesses, tremblez, voici celui qui lèvera contre vous le Marteau. Le mot fatal est prononcé, vous êtes des idoles, l'erreur de ce laid petit Juif sera votre arrêt de mort.' It must be remembered that the brilliant sceptic never takes a fair view even from his own cheerless standpoint of Paul's character, and here, strangely enough, views him rather as an Iconoclast than as a denouncer of an impure and cursed worship.

The city wholly given up to idolatry. The Greek word rendered 'wholly given up to idolatry' (*πατισδωλον*) only occurs in this passage, but is formed after the analogy of other similar compounded words, such as *κατάδιδωρος*, a place full of trees so as to be overgrown by them; *κατάμυλος*, a place full of vines. The word here would be translated more accurately, 'full of idols.' The epithet certainly seems to have been singularly appropriate. Other writers, writing of Athens in a different spirit to Paul, could not help noticing this striking peculiarity in the city. Petronius remarks satirically how at Athens one could find a god easier than a man. Another writes how it was almost impossible for one to make his way through these idols. Pausanias states how Athens had more images than all the rest of Greece put together. Xenophon's expression is the strongest when he calls Athens 'one great altar, one great offering to the gods' (*θεοῖς καὶ ἀνθρώποις*). Livy's remark is also noteworthy: 'In Athens are to be seen images of gods and of men of all descriptions and made of all materials.'

Ver. 17. Therefore disputed he in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the devout persons, and in the market daily with them that met with him. Here Paul, no doubt, on account of the intense feeling stirred up by the sight of all this idolatry, slightly deviated from his usual practice of first exclusively addressing himself to Jews and proselytes. At Athens he seems on the Sabbath days to have laboured in the synagogue among his own people; his week days he spent in the famous 'Agora,' and in the painted porch or cloister of Zeno the Stoic (the painted porch, Stoa Poecile, was, be it remembered, in the Agora), the spot where in Athens the philosophers, rhetoricians, and others were in the habit of meeting for conversation and discussion.

Ver. 18. Then certain philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoics. This would be more accurately rendered, 'of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers.' Epicurus, founder of the philosophic sect which bears his name, was born in Samos, B.C. 342. The Epicurean, while admitting the existence of gods, regarded them as paying no attention to men and the affairs of this world. They believed in no Providence, in no accountability, in neither reward nor retribution in the life to come. They were virtually Atheists. The real teaching of the masters of the sect was, that a wise man should enjoy to the uttermost the things of this life, for the soul being material was annihilated after death. Epicurus is believed himself to have taught a higher ideal of happiness, but very soon his followers reduced his system to what was in fact a teaching of the grossest sensualism. The world, according to the great Epi-



carean poem of Lucretius, was only formed by an accidental concourse of atoms, and was not in any sense created or reduced to order by any deity.

Zeno, a native of Cyprus, the founder of the Stoic school of philosophy, lived and taught in the latter part of the fourth century and in the earlier years of the third century before Christ. The Stoics condemned the worship of images and the use of temples, but they in some degree accepted popular mythology by considering the various gods as developments of the universal world-God. These were then Pantheists: they denied any overruling Providence, or, in fact, any interference on the part of Deity in the affairs of the world. Everything was governed by an iron destiny, to which 'God' Himself was subject. They believed only in the immortality of the soul by imagining it was ultimately absorbed in Deity; but even this absorption they seem to teach was only to be the lot of the wise and the good. The ideal life, however, proposed to the disciples of Zeno was a far higher one than the Epicurean ideal, a proud self-denial, an austere apathy (*ἀπαθεία*), untouched by human passion, unmoved alike by joy or sorrow, was aimed at by the true Stoic. V. Cousin admirably sums up the spirit of the strange philosophy which was far removed from the comprehension of the poor and illiterate, and, in fact, was only admired and followed by a limited number of cultured minds: 'Le Stoïcisme est essentiellement solitaire, c'est le soin exclusif de son âme, sans regard à celle des autres, et comme la seule chose importante est la pureté de l'âme, quand cette pureté est trop en péril, quand on désespère d'être victorieux dans la lutte, on peut la terminer comme l'a terminée Caton. Ainsi la philosophie n'est plus qu'un apprentissage de la Mort et non de la vie, elle tend à la Mort par son image, l'apathie et l'ataraxie, et se resont définitivement en un égoïsme sublime' (V. Cousin).

**What would this babbler say?** This word properly denotes a seed-gatherer, such as a sparrow or rook, or bird which frequents streets and market-places picking up seeds. Aristophanes thus uses the word in his *Birds*, 232: 'A babbler, one who picks up bits of news and information and retails them to others.'

He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods: because he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection. The name of 'Jesus,' whom Paul preached, was to them a new name and strange. Many, perhaps the majority, of the hearers mistook the 'Resurrection' (*ἀνάστασις*) for the name of a goddess, a word that Paul seems to have used frequently, as he evidently, in that speech of his on 'Mars' Hill,' laid deep stress on this great Christian doctrine. It must be remembered that his audience on this occasion was mainly composed of philosophers belonging to the Stoic and Epicurean schools, in both of which all individual life after death was denied. The Stoic theory of the absorption of certain souls in the essence of the Deity does not contradict this.



The Areopagus

Ver. 19. Brought him unto Areopagus. On this spot, writes Howson (*St. Paul*), 'a long series of awful causes connected with crime and religion had been determined, beginning with the legendary trial of Mars [Ares], which gave to the place the name of "Mars' Hill." A temple of this god was built on the brow of the eminence, and an additional solemnity was given to the place by the sanctuary of the Furies (Eumenides) in a broken cleft of the rock, immediately below the Judges' seats.' It has been much disputed whether or no Paul was arraigned formally as an accused before

the Areopagites on the charge of introducing strange gods into the city,—a 'religio,' consequently 'illicita.' In discussing this question, the powers and functions of the once famous court in the days of Paul must be considered. The position of the Athenian magistrates, in the time of Paul, was one of peculiar difficulty, owing to the hostile attitude of the city in the wars which resulted in the establishment in supreme power of Augustus and his successors. Its privileges as a 'free city' were only left to it by the clemency of the emperors, who were unwilling to punish a place which possessed the 'memories of Athens.' These privileges, however, were only held during the Cæsars' pleasure. The once famous and powerful Court of the Areopagus at most could only pretend to a jurisdiction over the city and its immediate neighbour-

hood. It seems, however, to have laid claim to and wielded powers far greater and more comprehensive than a merely local magisterial jurisdiction. Far beyond Athens, the decisions of the Council of the Areopagites in matters connected with law, morals, medicine, religious rites, etc., were received with respectful attention. They seem rather to have exercised the functions of an influential and widely respected academy or university, than the restricted and jealously watched duties of a local criminal court in a suspected privileged city. Before such a body of men Paul was probably courteously invited to set forth at length those 'strange religious doctrines' he had been preaching with such marked success in the Macedonian cities of Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea. The question of the judges, the speech of Paul, and the terms in which his subsequent dismissal by the court is related, in no way bear out the supposition that anything like a formal trial took place that day on the hill of Mars.

Ver. 21. *And the strangers which were there.* Although the ancient glory which the schools of Athens enjoyed was a good deal dimmed at this particular time, still the city was the resort of numbers of young Italians and others, for the purposes of education and study.

*Spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell or to hear some new thing.* Bengel paraphrases thus: 'New things were ever becoming stale, and newer things were sought for.' Alford paraphrases the emphatic Greek *καὶ οὐδὲν ἄλλο* by 'the very latest news.' Demosthenes rebukes this insatiable craving of the Athenians after news in the following terms: 'Tell me whether going up and down the market-place, asking each other, "Is there any news?" is the business of your life.'

Ver. 22. *In the midst of Mars' Hill,* or 'in the midst of the Areopagus.' Wordsworth thus describes the place: 'Sixteen stone steps, cut in the rock at its south-east angle, lead up to the hill of the Areopagus from the valley of the Agora (the "market"), where Paul had been disputing (ver. 17), which lies between it and the Pnyx. Immediately above these steps, on the level of the hill, is a bench of stone excavated in the limestone rock, forming three sides of a quadrangle. There the Areopagites sat. . . . On this hill are now the ruins of a small church dedicated to St. Dionysius the Areopagite, and commemorating his conversion by St. Paul. The apostle was brought perhaps by these steps of rock, which are the natural access to the summit, from the Agora below, in which he had been conversing, to give an account of the doctrines which he preached. Here, placed as he was in the centre of this platform in the very heart of Athens, with its statues, and altars, and temples of deities around him, he might well say the city was "crowded with idols."'

Amidst all the memories which were associated with this dread spot, still looked upon, even in the days of decay and partial ruin which had come upon Athens, by the people with superstitious reverence, Paul spoke his famous words, pressing his crucified Master's strange, sweet doctrines home to the citizens of the great idol city. It was the proclamation of the religion of the future (though they guessed it not then) in the face of the dying religion of the past.

*Paraphrase of the Speech.*

*Ye men of Athens.* His first words grace-

fully expressed the joy he felt at seeing the deeply reverential spirit of the Athenians, for among the almost countless altars of deities he had come upon one with the inscription running round it, 'TO THE UNKNOWN GOD.' This shrine to the 'Unknown' seemed to speak of their wish to pay a homage to some Divine Being whom they felt was near to them, but whose nature and attributes had not as yet been revealed to them. This 'revelation' was his high mission, to tell them of that 'Great Unknown' whose existence and whose majesty this solitary, nameless altar, at least, showed they suspected.

The God who, as Creator of all, is the true God, seeing He is Lord of all, He, the apostle went on to say, glancing round at the splendid temples about him, dwells in no earth-made house, and needs no earthly service, seeing He provides His creatures with everything. Out of 'one' did this true God create the whole human race destined to spread over all the earth, providing for the regular order of the seasons, and appointing their natural boundaries to each race; and all this He did in order that they might in time seek after the Architect of the glorious order of creation, who never forced them, however, to recognise Him as Lord, but left this seeking for the true God to their own free impulse, and waited for their spiritual longings to seek out and find the unseen Spirit God, who all the while was so near the spirit of each man. Had not one of their own poets come very near the discovery of this great truth—the nearness of the true God to each one of us?

Seeing, then, the connection between God and man is really so close, the Spirit God so near to each man's spirit, surely we must never seek for Him in any earthly representation, however beautiful and costly, never in any image hewn by man, be it of marble, of silver, or of gold.

For ages men have missed this lofty truth, the very foundation of all true religion. Is it not surely high time to awake out of this sleep of ages? See how God, for the sake of Jesus Christ (of whom Paul then, or on some previous occasion, had told them), forgives the past, and, giving a new and clearer revelation, bids men change their lives, and live hereafter as though expecting a resurrection of the body and a day of judgment: strange thoughts to them, but it was no mere ungrounded assertion of his (Paul's). God had indeed given man an earnest of His purpose eventually to raise the bodies of the dead, seeing He had already raised up from the dead their future judge, Jesus Christ.

In all things ye are too superstitious. The words in the English translation, 'too superstitious,' fail to express the graceful courtesy of Paul. It is observable in all the apostle's letters, whenever he rapidly proceeded to blame, he invariably begins with winning, gentle words (see for a good instance of this practice of St. Paul the Second Epistle to the Corinthian Church). The Greek *δυσσεβείς*—English Version, 'too superstitious'—signifies 'more than ordinarily reverential.' The force of the comparative is thus preserved, and also the touch of surprise which evidently was intended to be conveyed by the apostle—a surprise stirred up by the unusual appearance of the streets and open places of Athens, literally crowded with altars, shrines, and statues of deities. The word *δυσσεβείς* may be translated either as 'religious'

or 'superstitious,' in a good sense or in a bad sense. The meaning is left to be determined by the context of the passage. Chrysostom employs the word in a good sense, as does Josephus frequently. The usual German translation is *Gottesfürchtig*.

This characteristic of the Athenian people was often noticed by writers. Thus Sophocles, in the *Oed. Col.*, says they surpassed all the world in the honours they offered to the gods. Xenophon relates how, in comparison with other peoples, they observed twice the number of festivals (*De Repub. Athen.*). Pausanias tells us they exceeded all others in their piety toward the gods (*Attic.*). Josephus especially mentions that the Athenians were the most religious of the Greeks (*Contra Apion*).

Ver. 23. **For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions.** This should be rendered, 'and beheld the things that you worship.' It does not refer to

their devotions, or acts of worship, but to their temples, statues of divinities, shrines, and the like.

**TO THE UNKNOWN GOD.** The more accurate translation would be, 'TO AN UNKNOWN GOD.' Philostratus, who wrote A.D. 244, in his life of Apollonius (quoted by Gloag), says, alluding to the unusual reverential spirit of the Athenians: 'It is more discreet to speak well of all the gods, especially at Athens, where there are erected altars of unknown gods.' It seems that in the city there were several altars set up in different situations, each with the inscription, 'To an Unknown God.' The historical origin of these mysterious shrines cannot be determined. Some suppose they were very ancient; and at length it had been forgotten to whom originally they were dedicated, and that in some religious restoration the words in question had been engraved on the ancient stone. Others have suggested they were set up in some time either of public rejoicing or great calamity, and



The Parthenon.

the civic authorities being uncertain as to the especial deity they had to propitiate—Zeus or Poseidon, Athene or Ares—erected these altars 'to the Unknown.' Diogenes Laertius relates how, when once the Athenians were afflicted with a pestilence, Epimenides stayed the plague by sending white and black sheep from the Areopagus, and then sacrificing them on the various spots in the city where they lay down, to the unknown God who sent the pestilence. Therefore, this writer added, there are at Athens *nameless altars*.

Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. Here the more ancient MSS. read neuter forms, ἡ . . . θεῶν, instead of the masculine forms, ὁ . . . θεῶν; these would then be rendered, 'What therefore ye worship ignorantly . . . this I declare unto you.' The Athenians, Paul saw, evidently recognised something Divine which ought to be adored *outside* the known gods. This unknown Deity he proceeded to declare to them.

Ver. 24. **Dwelleth not in temples made with hands.** Commentators call attention to the remarkable reminiscence of the dying speech of Stephen before the Sanhedrim, which the Pharisee Saul must have listened to, and which so powerfully influenced his future life. 'Howbeit the Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands' (Acts vii. 48, 49). These words, uttered in full view of the magnificent fanes of the gods of which Athens was so proud, must have rung with a strange emphasis on the ears of the listening Areopagites.

Ver. 25. **Neither is he worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed anything.** The men of the heathen world loved to spend their wealth on the adornment of the temples of the gods, to whom also they brought costly offerings of food and drink, as though these imaginary eternal beings needed such things. *Iliad*, i. 37, 38 (Pope's Version), may be quoted as expressive of the true heathen feeling in this respect:

'If e'er with wreaths I hung thy sacred fane,  
Or fed the flames with fat of oxen slain.'

Paul's words were the outcome of a mind steeped in the often-repeated reminders and reproaches of the prophets, that the God of Israel was not to be worshipped with sacrifice and incense, but with a pure, noble life. The words of the Psalmist were evidently in his mind: 'I will take no bullock out of thy house, nor he-goats out of thy folds: For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle on a thousand hills. . . . If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine. . . . Thinkest thou that I will eat bulls' flesh and drink the blood of goats?' (Ps. l. 9-13). The higher minds among the Epicurean teachers, rising above the popular notion of worship, grasped this lofty conception, which the old Hebrew prophets so nobly set forth, of Deity being above the loves and passions of mortals, dwelling in a sphere far removed from earth and earthly needs. But while the Hebrew teachers used this sublime truth to show the infinite love which, needing nothing from men, could yet stoop to watch over them with a father's care, and to guide erring feet through the mazes of this life to a higher existence, the Epicurean only seems to have grasped it to show the deserted helplessness of mortals, and the serene selfishness of Divinity. See the lines of the Epicurean Lucretius:

Omnis enim per se Divom natura necesse est,  
Immortalis aevio summa cum pace fruatur.'

**Life and breath.** The God—Paul was preaching to them—not merely was the All-Creator but also the All-Preserver. Their very breath, by means of which from minute to minute each mortal lived, was His gift.

**Ver. 26. And hath made of one blood all nations of men.** Here Paul definitely asserts that God created the whole human race from one common stock. His reasons for this deliberate assertion of the common brotherhood of men no doubt are to be found in his desire to do away, once and for all, with the prevailing idea that different peoples owed their origin to varied ancestors, either themselves deities or immediately under the protection of some deity. The Athenians, for instance, believed they were sprung from the soil of Attica. The belief that all peoples sprang from one common ancestor Paul knew would do much to eradicate the notion that there were 'many Gods,'—would assist much in the reception of the great truth of the 'Fatherhood of God.' Besides this, Paul probably had in his mind the prejudice with which these haughty Greeks viewed him as a Barbarian Hebrew, a member of a despised oriental race. The beautiful and true conception of the 'common brotherhood of men' has in no little degree contributed to the reception of the gospel amid so many different peoples:

'Then, having met, they speak and they remember  
All are one family, their Sire is One,  
Cheers them with June and slays them with December,  
Portions to each the shadow and the sun.'

—F. W. H. MYERS.

**And hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation.** The one true God, different from the impassive selfish deity of the Epicurean schools, was not only the Architect and the Preserver of the universe, but was also the watchful governor of each people.

The burning eloquent words of 'the eastern stranger they were listening to, telling of appointed

times to a nation's prosperity, must have rung strangely and awfully in the ears of these proud Athenians, who lived only on the memories of a past greatness and superiority; while the assertion that Paul's God determined the bounds of the habitation of peoples, would painfully remind these Greeks that they had long ago reached the boundaries of their habitation and of their influence, which once seemed to promise to be limitless both in the east and west, and that these boundaries every year were being narrowed.

Thus claiming such powers for that God whose messenger he asserted himself to be, Paul warned them indirectly of the danger and folly of rejecting the message of a Being at once so mighty and beneficent.

**Ver. 27. That they should seek the Lord.** The older MSS. here read 'God' instead of 'the Lord.' The design of God's overruling providence was that men should seek after a knowledge of the Divine Ruler of all things, and also after a living union with this gracious and all-powerful Being. The Greek words, however, which begin the next clause (*ei ζήτετε*), and the mood of the



Portrait of Aratus.

verbs in the sentence, indicate very plainly that the result is doubtful. The speaker on the whole implies in a delicate manner that mankind had missed the mark at which they aimed. This is still more clearly implied by the general exhortation to repentance contained in ver. 30 below.

**They might feel after him.** The Greek word translated 'feel after' denotes the action of one blind who gropes after what he desires to find. Paul, says Schleiermacher, represents it 'as the ultimate purpose of all the great arrangements of God in the world that man should seek Him. He regards man's noblest aim and perfection as consisting in such seeking after and finding. Let us consider,' he adds, '(1) the great object of our search; and (2) the path which conducts to that object.'

**Though he be not far from every one of us.** **Ver. 28. For in him we live and move and have our being.** 'So near is He to all men, if they would but believe it. But the human race would prefer that He should be far distant; it continues to imitate our first parents, who hid themselves from the presence of God in Paradise' (Gossner quoted by Lange).

The words of ver. 28 explain the meaning of the assertion of 'God's being not far from every one of us.' On God we must depend every



moment for our life. We owe to Him our existence here, and every instant of our continuance in this world; and the apostle in the next sentence appeals to a then well-known saying of a famous writer in proof that this dependence upon and close connection with the Deity was a generally acknowledged fact.

As certain also of your poets have said, For we are also his offspring. The quotation is the beginning of an hexameter line taken verbatim from Aratus, a Cilician poet who wrote about two hundred years before Paul's visit to Athens. The work from which the citation is made was the *Phænomena*, an astronomical poem. Cleanthes, in his *Hymn to Zeus* (Jupiter), uses almost the very same words: 'For we thine offspring are.' Cleanthes was a Stoic, he lived about the same time as Aratus. There is no doubt that Paul was well read in Greek literature; elsewhere he quotes directly from Menander (1 Cor. xv. 33), from Epimenides (Tit. i. 12), besides other expressions in his epistles which are probably 'memories' of his studies in Greek poetry and philosophy.

Ver. 29. We ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold or silver or stone graven by art. The Greek word translated by 'Godhead'



Coin of Athens.

is better rendered 'Divinity,' or 'that which is Divine.' The thought here is expanded in Isa. xlv. 9-20, where the miserable absurdity of supposing that 'Divinity' could reside in a block of gold or in a log of wood, however skilfully cast or carved, is set forward with great power. Paul no doubt had the words of Isaiah in his mind here when he gazed with sorrow and amazement at the beautiful idols of Athens. In the words 'graven by art and man's device,' Paul specially alludes to those masterpieces of sculpture in ivory, gold, and marble, which were standing near him on the Areopagus, and in the varied temples and shrines of Athens the Religious.

Ver. 30. And the times of this ignorance God winked at. The English translation of the Greek word *ἀνεπίσταντος*, *winked at*, utterly fails to give the sense of the original, which should be rendered 'having overlooked.'—God now commandeth, etc. God had allowed those ages of ignorance to pass by without any special revelation or stern rebuke. He had sent no express messenger to declare His will to them. He had left them alone to the teachings of nature and the promptings of their own consciences; but now the time of forbearance was over, now He called men to repentance, to a change of mind and heart. Alford remarks that in the word *ἀνεπίσταντος*, *having overlooked*, 'lie treasures of mercy for those who lived in the times of ignorance.' For the expansion of these thoughts, see Epistle to the Romans, i. 20, etc., ii. 12, etc.

Ver. 31. Because he hath appointed a day in

the which he will judge the world in righteousness. The Greek word translated 'because' is better rendered 'inasmuch as.' This statement gives the reason why the Heathen world must repent—the day of judgment is fixed, and the Judge appointed. If now, after they have been warned, the Heathen still refuse to repent, they will be condemned.

He hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is mentioned as showing the possibility of a general resurrection of all men from the dead.

It was the assertion of this fact, that the body would be raised again, which excited the attention of some and the bitter scorn of others in Athens. He had been previously, we read, in the marketplace (the Agora), preaching Jesus and the resurrection; and it was the desire to hear more fully and quietly of this, to them strange and startling doctrine, that the leaders in the various schools of philosophy invited him to address them in the more retired court on Mars' Hill; but when in his argument he had come to speak of this resurrection, and was proceeding to tell them more of this Jesus who had been dead but now lived and reigned, they interrupted him and firmly but not discourteously adjourned the meeting. They felt, did these Epicurean and Stoic teachers, that if the single instance of Christ's resurrection was admitted or even allowed to be spoken of before such an assembly as that of the powerful Areopagites, the possibility of rising from the dead would be in a way conceded, and the teaching of these famous schools would be shown to be false.

Ver. 32. And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked, and others said, We will hear thee again of this matter. It has been suggested that those that mocked were followers of Epicurus, and that the men who wished to adjourn the question were of the school of Zeno. The Areopagites seem to have been divided, some openly mocking Paul and his doctrines; some in doubt seemingly wishing to hear him again, after probably his strange revelation had been discussed in private. The mockers, however, and the men who feared lest their interests should suffer if these new things were publicly taught, prevailed; for in the next verse we read:

Ver. 33. So Paul departed from among them.

We never hear of his visiting Athens again, nor does he ever in any of his subsequently written letters make mention of the beautiful idol city. Meyer suggests that the speech of Paul at Athens contains three divisions: (a) Theology, 24, 25; (b) Anthropology, 26-29; (c) Christology, 30. This third division was never developed, but was abruptly brought to a conclusion owing to Paul being requested to defer the rest of his address until some future time. Milman (*History of Christianity*, vol. ii.) beautifully observes upon the effect the apostle's words must have had upon his philosophic audience: 'Up to a certain point in this high view of the Supreme Being, the philosopher of the Garden as well as of the Porch might listen with wonder and admiration. It soared indeed high above the vulgar religion; and in the lofty and serene Deity who disdained to dwell in the earthly temple and needed nothing from the hand of man, the Epicurean might almost suppose that he heard the language of his own teacher. But the next sentence which as-

serted the providence of God as the active creative energy,—as the conservative, the ruling, the ordaining principle,—annihilated at once the atomic theory and the government of blind chance to which Epicurus ascribed the origin and preservation of the universe.

It is interesting to remember that Paul was alone at Athens, and that therefore the report of the speech must have been given to the writer of the 'Acts' by the apostle himself.

Ver. 34. **Howbeit certain men clave unto him, and believed.** There is no doubt that Paul failed in his attempt to found a Christian church at Athens. His stay does not appear to have been a prolonged one. While we possess five of Paul's letters addressed to Greek cities,—two to Thessalonica, two to Corinth, one to Philippi,—we have none written to the famous capital. Paul never seems to have revisited the city. Never again, either in the 'Acts' or in the contents of any of his subsequently written epistles, do we meet with the name of Athens.

The city of the 'violet crown' was one of the last of the great European centres really to accept Christianity. Even after the days of Constantine

the Great, Athens was the rallying-point of the dying Pagan party, the last home of the old schools of heathen philosophy (see for an able and picturesque account of Athens in the first days of Christianity, Renan, *St. Paul*, chap. vii.).

Among the which was Dionysius the Areopagite. This Dionysius must have been a man of power and distinction, for the Areopagites were chosen from the noblest families of Athens. The number of these judges seems to have varied at different periods. Eusebius and other ancient authors relate how this Dionysius subsequently became Bishop of Athens, and according to one tradition suffered martyrdom. The mystical writings attributed to him really belong to another Dionysius who flourished in the fourth century.

And a woman named Damaris. Nothing is known of this Damaris. Considering the seclusion in which Greek women lived, the mention of her name as if she had been present at the meeting on the Hill of Mars is singular. Chrysostom supposes that she was the wife of Dionysius. Stier suggests she was an Hetaira, one of that unhappily famous Athenian sisterhood who like Mary Magdalene was called to repentance.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

*Paul at Corinth—He returns to Jerusalem and Antioch—Apollos the Alexandrian becomes a Christian.*

1 **A**FTER these things Paul<sup>1</sup> departed from Athens, and came  
2 to<sup>a</sup> Corinth; And found a certain Jew named<sup>b</sup> Aquila,  
born in<sup>c</sup> Pontus, lately come from<sup>d</sup> Italy, with his wife<sup>e</sup> Priscilla;  
(because that<sup>f</sup> Claudius had commanded all<sup>g</sup> Jews to  
3 depart from Rome:) and came unto them. And because he  
was of the same craft, he abode with them, and<sup>h</sup> wrought: for  
4 by their occupation<sup>i</sup> they were tentmakers. And he<sup>j</sup> reasoned  
<sup>k</sup> in the synagogue every sabbath, and<sup>l</sup> persuaded the Jews and  
5 the Greeks. And<sup>m</sup> when Silas and Timotheus<sup>n</sup> were come  
from<sup>o</sup> Macedonia, Paul was<sup>p</sup> pressed in spirit,<sup>q</sup> and<sup>r</sup> testified  
6 to the Jews that<sup>s</sup> Jesus was Christ. And when they opposed  
themselves, and<sup>t</sup> blasphemed,<sup>u</sup> he shook his raiment, and said  
unto them, Your blood be upon your own heads; <sup>v</sup> I am clean:  
7 <sup>w</sup> from henceforth I will go unto the Gentiles. And he departed  
thence, and entered into a certain man's house, named<sup>x</sup> Justus,  
<sup>y</sup> one that worshipped God, whose house joined hard to the  
8 synagogue. And<sup>z</sup> Crispus, the<sup>aa</sup> chief ruler of the synagogue,

<sup>a</sup> Ch. xix. 1;  
<sup>b</sup> 1 Cor. i. 12;  
<sup>c</sup> 2 Cor. i. 1, 23;  
<sup>d</sup> 2 Tim. iv. 20.  
<sup>e</sup> So ver. 8;  
<sup>f</sup> 2 Cor. vi. 11.  
<sup>g</sup> Vers. 18, 26;  
<sup>h</sup> Rom. xvi. 3;  
<sup>i</sup> 1 Cor. xvi. 19.  
<sup>j</sup> So 2 Tim. iv. 19.  
<sup>k</sup> See ch. ii. 9.  
<sup>l</sup> See Heb. xiii. 24.  
<sup>m</sup> Ch. xi. 28.  
<sup>n</sup> Mat. xxv. 16 (Gk.). So ch. xx. 34;  
<sup>o</sup> 1 Cor. iv. 12;  
<sup>p</sup> 1 Thes. ii. 9;  
<sup>q</sup> 2 Thes. iii. 8.  
<sup>r</sup> See ch. xvii. 17.  
<sup>s</sup> See ch. xiii. 14.  
<sup>t</sup> Ch. xiii. 46;  
<sup>u</sup> 2 Cor. v. 11;  
<sup>v</sup> Gal. i. 10.  
<sup>w</sup> Ch. xvii. 14.  
<sup>x</sup> 15.  
<sup>y</sup> See ch. xvi. 12.

<sup>a</sup> See Lu. xii. 50. So Job xxxii. 18; Jer. xx. 9. <sup>b</sup> Ch. xx. 21. See Lu. xvi. 28. <sup>c</sup> Ch. xvii. 3; ver. 28.  
<sup>d</sup> See ch. xiii. 45. <sup>e</sup> Neh. v. 13. Cp. Mat. x. 14; ch. xiii. 51. <sup>f</sup> Ezek. xviii. 13, xxxiii. 4. See Lev. xx. 9.  
<sup>g</sup> Ch. xx. 26 (Gk.). Cp. Ezek. iii. 18, 19, xxxiii. 9. <sup>h</sup> See ch. xxviii. 28. <sup>i</sup> Ch. xvi. 14. See ch. xiii. 43.  
<sup>j</sup> 1 Cor. i. 14. <sup>k</sup> Ver. 17. See Mk. v. 22.

<sup>1</sup> Some of the older authorities omit the word 'Paul.'

<sup>2</sup> better, 'all the Jews.' <sup>3</sup> better, 'by their craft.' <sup>4</sup> or 'Timothy.'

<sup>5</sup> The older authorities, instead of 'spirit,' read 'word;' render then, 'was constrained by the word.'

<sup>6</sup> Several of the oldest authorities read here, 'Titus Justus.'

- believed on the Lord <sup>a</sup> with all his house; and many of <sup>a</sup> the  
 9 Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized. Then <sup>a</sup> spake  
 the Lord to Paul in the night by <sup>a</sup> a vision, Be not afraid, but  
 10 speak, and hold not thy peace: For <sup>a</sup> I am with thee, and no  
*man* shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in  
 11 this city. And he continued *there* a year and six months,  
 teaching the word of God among them.
- 12 And when Gallio was the <sup>b</sup> deputy <sup>c</sup> of <sup>c</sup> Achaia, the Jews  
 made insurrection <sup>b</sup> with one accord against Paul, and <sup>d</sup> brought  
 13 him to <sup>e</sup> the judgment seat, Saying, This *fellow* persuadeth men  
 14 to worship God contrary to <sup>f</sup> the law. And when Paul was  
*now* about to <sup>g</sup> open *his* mouth, Gallio said unto the Jews, If it  
 were a matter of wrong or wicked <sup>h</sup> lewdness, <sup>h</sup> O ye Jews, reason  
 15 would that I should <sup>i</sup> bear with you: <sup>10</sup> <sup>h</sup> But if it be a question  
 of words and names, and of <sup>j</sup> your law, look ye to it; for I will  
 16 be no judge of such *matters*. And he drave them from <sup>k</sup> the  
 17 judgment seat. Then all the Greeks <sup>11</sup> took <sup>i</sup> Sosthenes, the  
<sup>m</sup> chief ruler of the synagogue, and beat *him* before <sup>k</sup> the judg-  
 ment seat. And Gallio cared for none of those *things*.
- 18 And Paul *after this* tarried *there* yet a good while, <sup>12</sup> and then  
<sup>n</sup> took his leave of the brethren, and sailed thence into <sup>o</sup> Syria,  
 and with him <sup>p</sup> Priscilla and <sup>p</sup> Aquila: having <sup>q</sup> shorn *his* head  
 19 in <sup>r</sup> Cenchrea: for he had <sup>q</sup> a vow. And he came to <sup>r</sup> Ephesus,  
 and left them there: but he himself entered <sup>r</sup> into the syna-  
 20 gogue, and <sup>s</sup> reasoned with the Jews. When they desired *him*  
 21 to tarry longer time with them, he consented not; But <sup>s</sup> bade  
 them farewell, saying, <sup>t</sup> I must by all means <sup>u</sup> keep *this* feast  
 that cometh in Jerusalem: <sup>13</sup> but I will return again unto you,  
 22 <sup>s</sup> if God will. And he sailed from <sup>r</sup> Ephesus. And when he  
 had landed at <sup>v</sup> Cæsarea, and <sup>s</sup> gone up, and saluted the church,  
 23 he went down to <sup>w</sup> Antioch. And after he had <sup>b</sup> spent some  
 time *there*, he departed, and went over *all* the country of  
<sup>x</sup> Galatia and <sup>x</sup> Phrygia <sup>x</sup> in order, <sup>y</sup> strengthening all the  
<sup>z</sup> disciples.
- 24 And a certain Jew named <sup>h</sup> Apollos, born at <sup>i</sup> Alexandria, an  
 eloquent <sup>14</sup> man, and mighty in the Scriptures, came to <sup>h</sup> Ephesus.
- 25 This *man* was <sup>i</sup> instructed in the way of the Lord; and being  
<sup>m</sup> fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught <sup>n</sup> diligently the

<sup>c</sup> See ch. xvi. 6. Cp. Gal. i. 6, iv. 14.

<sup>d</sup> See ch. ii. 10. <sup>e</sup> See Lu. i. 3.

<sup>f</sup> See ch. xiv. 22. <sup>g</sup> Ver. 27.

<sup>h</sup> Ch. xix. 1: 1 Cor. i. 12, iii. 4, 5, 6, 22, iv. 6, xvi. 12; Tit. iii. 13.

<sup>i</sup> Gal. vi. 6 (Gk.). See Lu. i. 4.

<sup>m</sup> Rom. xii. 11.

<sup>n</sup> Gk. as ver. 26; ch. xxiii. 15, 20, xxiv. 22.

<sup>1</sup> proconsul of Achaia

<sup>8</sup> better, 'assaulted.'

<sup>9</sup> or better, 'crime.'

<sup>10</sup> that I should have borne with you

<sup>11</sup> The majority of the older authorities omit 'the Greeks.'

<sup>12</sup> literally, 'still many days.'

<sup>13</sup> Very many of the more ancient authorities omit the words, 'I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem.'

<sup>14</sup> Some render 'a learned man.'

<sup>x</sup> See ch. xi. 14.  
<sup>y</sup> So ch. xxiii.  
<sup>z</sup> 11, xxvii. 23,  
 24.

<sup>a</sup> See ch. xii. 9.  
<sup>b</sup> Jer. i. 8, 10;  
<sup>c</sup> Mat. xxviii.  
 20. See

<sup>d</sup> Josh. i. 5.  
<sup>e</sup> See ch. xiii. 7.  
<sup>f</sup> Ver. 27;  
 ch. xix. 21;  
 Rom. xv. 26,  
 xvi. 5;

<sup>g</sup> 1 Cor. xvi. 15;  
<sup>h</sup> 2 Cor. i. 1,  
 ix. 2, xi. 10;  
<sup>i</sup> 1 Thes. i. 7, 8.

<sup>j</sup> See Mat. x.  
 18.  
<sup>k</sup> Vers. 16, 17.  
<sup>l</sup> See Mat.  
 xxvii. 19.  
<sup>m</sup> Ver. 15.

<sup>n</sup> See Mat. v. 2.  
<sup>o</sup> So ch. xiii.  
 10 (Gk.).  
<sup>p</sup> See Mat.

<sup>q</sup> xvii. 17.  
<sup>r</sup> So ch. xxiii.  
 29, xxv. 19.  
<sup>s</sup> 1 Cor. i. 17

<sup>t</sup> Ver. 8.  
<sup>u</sup> Ver. 21. See  
 Lu. ix. 61.  
<sup>v</sup> Mat. iv. 24;  
 Lu. ii. 2;

<sup>w</sup> ch. xv. 23, 42,  
 xx. 3, xxi. 3;  
 Gal. i. 21.  
<sup>x</sup> Vers. 2, 26.

<sup>y</sup> Num. vi. 18;  
 ch. xxi. 24.  
<sup>z</sup> Rom. xvi. 1.  
<sup>a</sup> Vers. 21, 24;

<sup>b</sup> ch. xix. 1,  
 xvii. 26, xx  
 16, 17; 1 Cor.  
 xv. 32, xvi. 8.

<sup>c</sup> Eph. i. 1;  
<sup>d</sup> 1 Tim. i. 3;  
<sup>e</sup> 2 Tim. i. 18,  
 iv. 12;

<sup>f</sup> Rev. i. 11.  
<sup>g</sup> So ch. xxi.  
 29; Rev. ii. 1  
<sup>h</sup> See ch. xiii.

<sup>i</sup> 14.  
<sup>j</sup> See ch. xvii.  
 17.  
<sup>k</sup> So ch. xx. 16.

<sup>l</sup> See Mat.  
 xxvi. 18.  
<sup>m</sup> So 1 Cor. iv.  
 19, xvi. 7;

<sup>n</sup> Heb. vi. 3;  
<sup>o</sup> Jas. iv. 15.  
<sup>p</sup> Cp. Rom. i.  
 9, xv. 32;  
<sup>q</sup> 1 Pet. iii. 17.

<sup>r</sup> See ch. viii.  
 40.  
<sup>s</sup> More fully  
 ch. xxi. 12, 15.

<sup>t</sup> See ch. xi. 26.  
<sup>u</sup> Ch. xx. 3  
 (Gk.).

<sup>v</sup> See ch. xi. 26.  
<sup>w</sup> See Lu. i. 4.

- 26 *things* of the Lord,<sup>15</sup> knowing only <sup>o</sup>the baptism of John. And <sup>o</sup>Lu. vii. 29:  
 he began to <sup>ch. xix. 3.</sup> speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when <sup>See ch. iv. 29</sup>  
<sup>g</sup>Aquila and Priscilla<sup>16</sup> had heard, they took him unto *them*,  
 and <sup>g</sup>expounded unto him <sup>g</sup>the way of God more <sup>g</sup>perfectly.  
 27 And when he was disposed to pass into <sup>g</sup>Achaia, the brethren  
 wrote, exhorting<sup>17</sup> the disciples to <sup>g</sup>receive him: who, when he  
 was come, <sup>g</sup>helped them much which had believed through  
 28 grace: For he <sup>g</sup>mightily convinced <sup>g</sup>the Jews, *and that pub-*  
 licly, showing by the <sup>g</sup>Scriptures that <sup>g</sup>Jesus was Christ.

<sup>15</sup> *The more trustworthy authorities read here, 'the things concerning Jesus.'*

<sup>16</sup> *The older authorities invert the name 'Priscilla and Aquila.'*

<sup>17</sup> *Some would render, 'the brethren exhorted him, and wrote to the disciples.'*

*St. Paul at Corinth, 1-18.*

Ver. 1. **Came to Corinth.** The Corinth which was so intimately connected with the life and work of Paul was a new city, comparatively speaking. The old city of the same name, so renowned in Grecian story, had been completely destroyed by the Roman Mummius, and for a hundred years the capital of the 'Achaean League' was left a heap of ruins. Its destruction was, indeed, so complete that it passed into a proverb. Some eighty-seven years before Paul's visit, Julius Cæsar rebuilt the fallen city, and made it a 'Colonia'; and at this period it was a city of the second rank in the Empire. The growth of the new city was strangely rapid; it soon surpassed its former opulence and splendour; it became a vast commercial centre, and was frequented by strangers from all parts. To a city so peopled, and possessing so great a trade, it can easily be believed that



Coin of Corinth.

many Jews were attracted. The laxity of the morals of Corinth has been frequently commented upon; writers tell us there was, in this great and wicked city, one temple dedicated to Venus Pandemos, to which a thousand courtesans were attached.

It was in this great mercantile centre that Paul fixed his abode; and here for a year and a half he remained. His success in his missionary work was very marked; for in this dissolute city of traders from all parts of the world the 'tent-maker' founded a great and influential community, obedient to the commands of Christ. In the records of the Church of the first days, the Corinthian community in numbers, in steadfastness, in devotion, take rank with Antioch and Ephesus, Thessalonica and Rome.

Ver. 2. **And found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla.** It seems, on the whole, probable that Aquila and Priscilla—two great

names in early Christian story—were Christians before they met with Paul. There is no mention in the 'Acts' of their conversion; and, as it has been well argued, Paul's 'finding these Jews out and consorting with them, affords a strong presumption in favour of their Christianity: only among Christians could the apostle feel himself at home.' The friendship between Paul and the two tentmakers, Aquila, and Priscilla his wife, appears to have been very intimate and enduring. We read of them several times in his epistles. They were with him during his long residence at Ephesus; they were at Rome when he wrote the great letter to the Christians of that city; once (Rom. xvi. 3, 4), he tells us, these devoted friends laid down their necks for his (Paul's) life. If, as we suppose (see note on the next sentence), these two Jews had embraced the faith of Jesus before the meeting with Paul, then Aquila and Priscilla are the two most ancient-known members of the primitive Church of Rome.

Because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome. Suetonius (*Claudius*, xxv.) has a statement which exactly fits in with these words of the writer of the 'Acts.' He (the Emperor Claudius) banished the Jews from Rome, who were constantly making disturbances at the instigation of one 'Chrestus.' Christus was not unfrequently written or pronounced 'Chrestus' (see Tertullian, *Apol.*). It is more than probable, considering the constant communication that was taking place between Rome and Antioch and Caesarea, that Christianity had been introduced into Rome by travelling Syriac Jews long before this (A.D. 51). At that first Pentecost, for instance, nearly twenty years before, we know 'strangers of Rome' listened at Jerusalem to the inspired utterances of Peter and the eleven (Acts ii. 10). We know that a large Jewish colony dwelt in the capital city; the causes, therefore, of the disturbance which occasioned the decree of the Emperor Claudius, are easily conceived. Jealousy on the part of the leaders of the Jewish community, was soon excited against the teachers of the new doctrines of Jesus; and what we have seen taking place at Antioch in Pisidia, at Lystra, at Philippi, at Thessalonica, no doubt on a larger scale took place in the crowded Jews' quarter on the banks of the Tiber at Rome; and the result of the uproar was the imperial decree which banished for a season all the Jewish community from Rome. Among the victims of the decree

were the tentmaker of Pontus and his wife, Aquila and Priscilla, whom Paul met with and joined at Corinth. This imperial decree which banished the Jews does not appear to have long continued in force. When Paul wrote the Epistle to the Romans, some six or seven years later, Aquila and Priscilla had already returned to Rome; and when Paul was taken to the metropolis as a prisoner, he found many Jews there.

Ver. 3. And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought (for by their occupation they were tentmakers). We have here the first mention of the handicraft by which, during so many periods of that toilsome, anxious missionary life of his, Paul earned his daily bread. This trade, learned in his boyhood, gives us no clue to the circumstances of the family of Saul of Tarsus. We have good reason for assuming that the family were in affluent circumstances. Every Jewish boy was carefully taught a trade. Since

the captivity, and the terrible misfortunes of the chosen people, the vicissitudes of life had taught the Rabbis the stern necessity which existed for every Jewish boy to be able at least to earn his daily bread in the foreign cities where the chances of war or persecution might transport him. We read in the Talmud, 'What is commanded of a father towards his son? To circumcise him, to teach him the law, to teach him a trade.' Rabbi Judah saith: 'He that teacheth not his son a trade, teacheth him to be a thief.' Rabban Gamaliel saith: 'He that hath a trade in his hand, to what is he like? He is like a vineyard that is fenced.' Tentmaking was a common occupation in Paul's native Cilicia. These tents were made of the rough hair of the goats, which abounded in the Cilician hill country. It was a well-known trade in the markets of the Levant. This tent-cloth was generally known as 'Cilicium.' We read of it, this hair-cloth, in mediæval works on peni-



Ruins at Corinth.

tential discipline. The word Cilicium is still retained in French, Spanish, and Italian.

It is probable that the work of Aquila and Paul was the making-up of this goat's-hair cloth into tents. 'Paul,' writes St. Chrysostom, 'after working miracles, would stand in his workshop of Corinth, and stitch the leather skins (the Greek father appears not to have known of the ordinary goat's-hair cloth) with his hands, while the angels looked on him lovingly, and the devils with fear.' At Miletus, when Paul took leave of the elders of Ephesus, with whom he had spent so long a time, he expressly alludes to the toil of his hands (Acts xx. 34). Allusion is also made to it in 1 Thess. ii. 9; 2 Thess. iii. 8; 1 Cor. iv. 12.

Ver. 4. And he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath. According to his invariable custom, speaking the things of the kingdom, first to his own countrymen, and to the strangers who loved the God of the Jews, and worshipped with them in the synagogue. In the desert wanderings,

when they came out from Egypt; in their own land, in the golden days of David and Solomon; in the captivity of Babylon; in the wide dispersion which immediately preceded and succeeded the fall of the city and temple; during the eighteen hundred years which have elapsed since that awful catastrophe; *now*, in our days, in almost every great city of the world, have this strange, unchanging race kept this solemn Sabbath rest, in accordance with the charge which the God of Israel delivered to His great servant, whom the Jews, in loving memory, still call 'Moses our Rabbi.'

Ver. 5. And when Silas and Timotheus were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in the spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus was Christ. The older mss., instead of the words *ἐν πνεύματι*, in the spirit, read *ἐν λόγῳ*, in the word, the translation would then run, 'Paul was constrained by the word,'—that is, when his two friends Silas and Timotheus came, their presence gave him a new impulse: he was able to work with

better heart than when all alone he had to toil for his daily bread, and then, all weary and solitary, to meet the various checks and discouragements which so often perplex God's true servants in their work. It is not improbable that the assistance Timotheus brought him from his dear converts at Thessalonica in part, at least, freed him from the necessity of hard, unremitting labour (see 2 Cor. xi. 9). The word translated 'was pressed' is a singular one; it was used once very solemnly by the Lord Himself (see Luke xii. 50: 'I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I *straitened* (or *pressed*) till it be accomplished'). The word tells of an intense Divine impulse, urging to a work which brooks no delay or hesitation.

Ver. 6. **And when they opposed themselves, and blasphemed.** The more than usually violent opposition of the Jews which appears from these words, and also from the apostle's sad, reproachful allusion in the First Epistle, written about this time, to Thessalonica (1 Thess. ii. 14), was no doubt stirred up by the intense earnestness of Paul in his work after the arrival of Silas and Timotheus, when he was 'pressed and constrained by the word.'

**He shook his raiment.** That is, he shook the very dust out of his garments—a similarly symbolical action to the one related in chap. xiii. 51, in Pisidian Antioch, when he shook off the dust of his feet. In each of these dramatic actions, so common among oriental peoples, Paul desired to show his complete renunciation of those Jews 'displeasing to God, and enemies to all mankind,' as he terms them in his Thessalonian letter; not even a particle of dust might remain on his feet or garments as a bond of union (see the direction of the Master in such cases, Matt. x. 14).

**Your blood be upon your own heads; I am clean.** I am pure, he would say, free from guilt and responsibility, although you, in your blind perverseness, perish. The terms of this terrible expression would be well known to the Jewish Rabbis and leaders at Corinth; they were from Ezek. xxxiii. 4.

Ver. 7. **And he departed thence, and entered into a certain man's house, named Justus, one that worshipped God, whose house joined hard to the synagogue.** As long as it was possible, Paul seems always to have made the synagogue, or the meeting-place of prayer for the Jews, his centre of work; but this usually, after a time, was closed to him. So at Rome we read of 'his own hired house;' at Ephesus, 'the school of Tyrannus;' at Corinth, it was the house of a proselyte close by the Jews' synagogue, where Paul was in the habit of assembling the little Church of Christ, to instruct them in the gospel of his Master. The better MSS. here, instead of 'Justus,' read 'Titus, or Titius Justus.' It is possible this was the 'Titus' (Gal. ii. 1) who subsequently became the celebrated companion of Paul, and in the end one of his successors in the rule of the churches. In this very uncertain reference we possess the only possible allusion in the 'Acts' to St. Paul's famous companion.

Ver. 8. **And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house.** On the solemn separation of Paul from the Jews, this ruler of the synagogue, evidently a man of high consideration, joined the Church of Jesus. He was one of the few persons in Corinth

whom Paul baptized with his own hand (1 Cor. i. 14). We have here another instance in which a whole family became Christians. A very old tradition speaks of this Crispus as subsequently Bishop of Egina.

**And many of the Corinthians hearing believed.** That is, many of the idolatrous inhabitants of Corinth, in distinction to the Jews and proselytes before alluded to.

Ver. 9. **Then spake the Lord to Paul in the night by a vision.** A form most probably appeared to the apostle when he heard the voice bidding him be of good courage (see for a similar vision, when a form appeared and a voice was heard, xvi. 9, xxii. 18).

Ver. 10. **I have much people in this city.** 'How great is the mercy of God! Nineveh, Sodom, Corinth,—no city is so corrupt that He does not send preachers of righteousness to the people. . . . Paul accomplished a greater work in the wicked city of Corinth than in the learned city of Athens; Paul had the pleasure of changing these impure and sinful souls into pure brides, whom he conducted to Christ, and to whom he could afterwards say, Ye were thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers, extortioners; but ye are washed, sanctified, justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of our God. . . . All this teaches us not to grow weary, even when we are dealing with the worst of men' (Starke and others, quoted by Lange on this passage).

Ver. 11. **And he continued there a year and six months.** This year and a half was the whole period of his residence at Corinth. It was during this lengthened stay that the apostle wrote the two epistles to the church of Thessalonica, the earliest letters we possess of St. Paul.

Ver. 12. **And when Gallio was the deputy of Achaia.** The Greek verb rendered 'was the deputy,' should be translated 'was the proconsul.' Gloag remarks that the Roman province of Achaia was almost of the same extent with the modern kingdom of Greece. It included the Peloponnesus and the rest of Greece proper; whereas Macedonia, Epirus, Thessaly, and part of Illyria formed the province of Macedonia. These provinces were transferred from the government of the senate to that of the emperor, and *vice versa*, more than once. The writer of the 'Acts,' however, with his usual scrupulous historical accuracy, speaks of the governor of the province of Achaia as proconsul. Suetonius expressly mentions that Claudius the emperor gave up to the senate the provinces of Achaia and Macedonia, which would account for the governor being styled proconsul, the title of the senate's official. The proconsul had been adopted by the rhetorician L. Junius Gallio, whose name he took, and was generally known as Junius Annæus Gallio, brother of Seneca, the famous philosopher and tutor of Nero. Gallio was one of the marked men of that age. He is mentioned by Tacitus, Statius, Seneca, and others. He appears to have been a cultivated and polished scholar, popular, and even beloved. Seneca writes of him with the tenderest affection: 'My brother Gallio, whom every one loves too little, even he who loves him most.' Statius gives him a beautiful but untranslatable epithet when he calls him 'dulcis Gallio.' Renan (*St. Paul*), writing of this Roman official, well sums up contemporary history in his words: 'C'était un bel esprit et une âme noble, un ami des poètes et des écrivains célèbres.'

Tous ceux qui le connaissent l'adoraient. . . . Il semble que ce fut sa haute culture hellénique qui le fit choisir, sous le lettré Claude pour l'administration d'une Province (Achaïa) que tous les gouvernements un peu éclairés entouraient d'attentions délicates.

**The Jews made insurrection with one accord against Paul.** It is not stated what circumstances directly led up to this attack on Paul. It has been suggested that the change of government on the arrival of Gallio encouraged the Jewish party, ever bitterly hostile to their old leader, to bring about his arrest. It was no doubt, however, devised at the suggestion of his sleepless enemies in the Holy Land, who watched continually his movements and his work.

**And brought him to the judgment-seat.** It was the custom of the provincial governors of the Empire to hold their courts on certain fixed days of the week. These sittings were commonly held in the Agora or market-place. The 'judgment-seat' (τὸ βῆμα), mentioned again twice (see vers. 16, 17), was of two kinds—(1) fixed in some public place; or (2) moveable and taken about by the magistrate, to be set up in whatever spot he might wish to sit.

**Ver. 13. Saying, This fellow persuadeth men to worship God contrary to the law.** There is no doubt but that the 'law' here alluded to was the law not of the Jews, but of the Empire; it was the Roman, not the Mosaic law, which the stranger Jew, Paul, was accused of violating, and the offence consisted in the attempt to promulgate a religion which was not sanctioned by the imperial government. There were, besides that form of Paganism which was the state religion of Rome, other systems of worship formally sanctioned and recognised by the state; among these, Judaism, although for a time banished from Rome itself, was ranked. The apostle was charged now before the proconsul's court with preaching in Corinth a new and unlawful religion. From Gallio's own comment in ver. 15, there is no doubt but that Paul was accused of introducing new deities as objects of worship. It was a novel and unprincipled method of action, and as the event showed, one seen through by the Roman official.

**Ver. 14. And when Paul was now about to open his mouth, Gallio said unto the Jews.** There is little doubt but that Gallio knew something about the Christian sect then becoming numerous in several of the cities of the Empire. One so high in favour as the proconsul of Achaia, who had been necessarily thrown in contact with so many of the chief personages of the Empire, was, of course, well acquainted with the outlines of the history of these Christians; and Gallio, in common with other noble Romans, regarded them simply as an offshoot of the great Jewish race,—as dissenters, perhaps, from some of the ancestral superstitions, but fairly entitled, in common with their co-religionists, to the contemptuous toleration and even protection of Rome.

**If it were a matter of wrong or wicked lewdness, O ye Jews, reason would that I should bear with you.** The Roman judge's answer to the Jewish accusation against the Christian Paul was: If what you allege this stranger to have done partook of the nature either of 'wrong' (ἀδικημα, an act of injustice, fraud, dishonesty) or of 'wicked lewdness' (ῥαδιούργημα πονηρὸν, a wicked crime), then I would have gravely con-

sidered the charge; but, by your own showing, nothing of the nature of crime is involved in your accusation.

**Ver. 15. But if it be a question of words and names, and of your law, look ye to it; for I will be no judge of such matters.** If the question turned merely upon a word [the Greek equivalent here is in the singular] and upon certain names, Gallio had most likely in Rome or elsewhere heard the name of Jesus, and how the Christians termed Him Christ, the Anointed One, their expected king Messiah; but as the Roman state records related how this Person had been put to death by the Procurator of Judea, Pilate, the Proconsul looked upon the whole matter as a harmless superstition on the part of Paul and his fellow-Christians. Certainly the majesty of the Empire was not called to interfere in these disputes about a dream or a phantom. Gallio saw that the grievance had nothing to do with Rome and her laws.

**Ver. 16. And he drave them from the judgment-seat.** The language shows that some force had to be used to induce these importunate accusers to leave the court.

**Ver. 17. Then all the Greeks took Sosthenes, the chief ruler of the synagogue, and beat him before the judgment-seat.** The better mss. simply read, 'Then all took,' etc.; *the Greeks* was a later interpolation. There is little doubt that 'all' refers here to the Gentile or Greek populace, who, ever ready to show their hatred to the Jews dwelling among them, took this opportunity, when the despised people were being driven ignominiously out of court, of venting their dislike upon the Jewish leader. Some commentators have, however, supposed that the 'all' refers not to the Greek populace, but to the Jews themselves, who, angry at finding their designs against Paul frustrated, fell upon their own leader, to whose want of skill or perhaps to whose treachery in the cause they ascribed their present failure before Gallio. This supposition is based in great measure on the possible identification of this Sosthenes with the Sosthenes mentioned in 1 Cor. i. 1, and upon the hypothesis that he was already a secret friend of Paul's, and at heart a Christian.

**And Gallio cared for none of those things.** The utter indifference of these great Roman officials to all religion is well painted in these few words. Such questions as had been brought before his tribunal that day were, to one trained in Gallio's cheerless school, having, as he thought, no bearing direct or indirect on the present life, entirely without interest. Like Pilate, when One greater than Paul stood before him similarly accused, this Roman seemed to favour the accused, possibly owing to the popular dislike of the Jewish race. Pilate's celebrated words, 'What is truth?' betray the same utter carelessness and indifference to religion and religious truth.

**Ver. 18. And Paul after this tarried there yet a good while.** Some months' additional work is covered by this expression. During this period, after the Proconsul Gallio's dismissal of the complaint, Paul no doubt worked unhindered by his Jewish enemies, and was able to lay the foundations of one of the most flourishing churches of the first days at Corinth. The publicity attending on the arrest of St. Paul, and his trial before the court of Gallio, no doubt assisted him in his efforts to gain a hearing in that wicked and licentious city.



And sailed thence into Syria. Antioch in Syria was his ultimate destination. He embarked in the first instance for Ephesus in Asia Minor (see ver. 19).

**Priscilla and Aquila.** See note on ver. 2 of this chapter. In other passages (Rom. xvi. 3; 2 Tim. iv. 19) are these two intimate friends of the apostle named in this unusual order, *the woman coming first*. There is no doubt that it was her influence and powers, not her husband's, which gave the couple so prominent a position in the early Christian Church. She was a distinguished instance of one of those bright earnest women whose powers were called into action by the work and teaching of Jesus Christ and His chosen friends, one of the pioneers of that devoted band of women-workers who have now for eighteen hundred years done such splendid work for their Lord's cause in all climes and among all peoples.

**Having shorn his head in Cenchrea.** Cenchrea was the harbour on the eastern side of Corinth, distant about ten miles from the city. It served the commerce of Asia. There was, on the other side of the city and isthmus, another port, Lechæum, for the Italian and western trade. A Christian Church was very early planted at Cenchrea (see Rom. xvi. 1), no doubt by St. Paul during his lengthened Corinthian residence.

**For he had a vow.** Our knowledge of the exact nature of 'vows' among the Jews at this period is not sufficient for us to describe with any detail the circumstances which attended the carrying out this 'vow' of St. Paul. It was certainly not a *strict* Nazarite vow, which would have required the shaving of the head in Jerusalem; and the hair cut off would in that case have been burnt as an offering in the Temple. There were, however, probably modifications of the original rules in the case of foreign Jews residing at a distance from the Holy Land.

The 'vow' was probably an expression of gratitude to the Eternal of hosts for having preserved him from evil, and for having prospered his work during his long stay at Corinth. It involved, of course, a lengthened period of abstinence and special prayer. It has been asked why such an one as St. Paul, by his own example, stamped with approval such an observance, which seems to belong to the old worn-out Jewish customs. To this we answer—(1) St. Paul's early association and training had familiarised him with these old cherished practices, and in such seasons of fasting and prayer for long years he had found special refreshment and help; and (2) he was always glad when, without injury to the great questions of Gentile liberty, and the perfect independence from the old Mosaic law of the Gentile peoples, he could show his loved brethren of the Jews that *he* did not despise the law. Nor did he ever teach other Jews to despise it; on the contrary, he was only too glad on solemn occasions to show his reverence for it, his love for its ancient precepts. We find Paul always seizing opportunities of devoting himself to win the Jews whenever he could do so without injuring his own especial work among the isles of the Gentiles: 'To the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews . . . to the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some' (1 Cor. ix. 20-22).

*St. Paul returns to Antioch by way of Ephesus and Jerusalem, and there closes his Second Missionary Journey—He then starts on his Third Missionary Enterprise, 19-23.*

Ver. 19. **And he came to Ephesus, and left them there.** For a note on Ephesus, see ver. 1 of the next chapter, where a lengthened sojourn of the apostle in that city is related. 'Them,' that is, Aquila and Priscilla, who had removed to Ephesus with a view of carrying on there their tentmaking trade. In the Syriac Version we read at the beginning of ver. 21, 'And he left Aquila and Priscilla at Ephesus, and he himself sailed and came to Cæsarea.' The voyage from Corinth to Ephesus under favourable circumstances was then accomplished in two or three days, though Cicero relates how he once, and on another occasion his brother Quintus, occupied two weeks in sailing from Ephesus to Athens; but unusual delays in both of these cases retarded the voyages.

**But he himself entered into the synagogue, and reasoned with the Jews.** These words were evidently inserted in the narrative by the writer of the 'Acts' to make it clear that Paul's purpose at Ephesus was to carry out no business plans with his old friends and associates, Priscilla and her husband. They came to Ephesus together; they remained behind when he left; and even while there, the apostle took no part in the old work of the tentmaking, but, as his custom was, preached and taught. Paul's association with Aquila and other workers was always only a temporary one, taken up and laid down when the necessity which had occasioned his working with his own hands had passed. His life shows the dignity of all labour, still Paul's real work was something very different to that of an ordinary handicraftsman.

Ver. 20. **When they desired him to tarry longer with them.** Ephesus appears to have been, from these days onward, favourably disposed to receive the gospel. This earnest request to Paul to stay longer with them on this the occasion of his first visit, no doubt induced him to fix upon the great Asian city as the centre of his work after his Third Missionary Journey. Ephesus, in the earliest Christian annals, occupied a foremost and most distinguished place. It was not only one of the churches founded by Paul, but it was trained up under his own personal superintendence nearly for three years. Timothy, Paul's most intimate and perhaps his most loved disciple, after an interval, succeeded the apostle in the personal superintendence of the church at Ephesus, and later it was the home of St. John, who, according to universal tradition, spent the latter years of his eventful life in this city. Here, too, this friend of Christ was buried.

**He consented not; Ver. 21. But bade them farewell, saying, I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem.** There is a curious variation in the readings in this verse; the words from 'I must' down to 'Jerusalem' are omitted in many of the ancient authorities; but as there is no conceivable reason for the insertion of such a clause, and some of the better MSS. and Fathers, and, above all, the Syriac Version, contain the words, it is better with many of the modern commentators to retain them as genuine. 'The feast' is most probably that of Pentecost, as the sea, either before the feast of Passover in the spring, or of Tabernacles in late autumn, would not have



been considered safe for ships, it being hardly probable that under the circumstances, which did not seem very pressing, one like Paul would have undertaken an exceptionally expensive and dangerous voyage. This explains his words to the Ephesian Jews, 'I must by all means keep the feast that cometh in Jerusalem.' The next feast in rotation would be that of 'Tabernacles' in October. It is not unlikely that the means of transit from the great cities of the Mediterranean seaboard, for a Jew who wished to keep his 'Pentecost' in Jerusalem, were abundant and inexpensive. Large bodies of these Jewish pilgrims from distant countries were evidently present at the first Pentecost feast described in Acts ii. (see especially vers. 9-11).

**But I will return again unto you, if God will.** The apostle made haste to fulfil this promise (see chap. xix. 1).

**Ver. 22. And when he had landed at Cæsarea.** This Roman capital of Judæa was the usual and most convenient port for travellers journeying to Jerusalem.

**And gone up, and saluted the church.** 'Gone up,' that is, from the lowlands surrounding Cæsarea to the highlands in the midst of which Jerusalem was situated. 'The Church' is, of course, the mother church of Christianity, the congregations of believers in Jerusalem. This was apparently Paul's fourth visit, since his conversion, to the sacred city. He seems only to have remained a short time, and we hear of no events of any importance taking place during his stay. The very vague mention of it in this passage is the only allusion we find to it. He, no doubt, on this occasion met with James and his brother apostles, and recounted to them the progress of the faith in Corinth and Greece.

**He went down to Antioch.** Geographically speaking strictly correct, the position of Jerusalem lying much higher than Syrian Antioch. Thus terminated his Second Missionary Journey; it had occupied, roughly speaking, three years.

**Ver. 23. And after he had spent some time there.** Many expositors suppose that during this residence of St. Paul at Antioch took place his famous interview with the leading apostle of the circumcision, on which occasion Paul, to use his own words, withstood Peter to the face, 'because he was to be blamed (see Gal. ii. 11 and following verses).

**He departed on his third great missionary journey,** about A.D. 54. He probably went first from Syrian Antioch to Tarsus, and then in a north-west direction through Galatia; and then turning south-west, he journeyed through Phrygia and so to Ephesus, where for a long period he took up his abode.

**Strengthening all the disciples.** That is, in the various churches founded by him and his companions during the first two missionary journeys. Many things alluded to in the Galatian epistle, written sometime in the Ephesian residence which immediately succeeded this long journey, were suggested by notes made during this visit.

*An Episode relating the Spread of the Teaching of John the Baptist and his School, with a short Account of one famous Disciple of the Baptist, Apollos of Alexandria, xviii. 24-xix. 7.*

**Ver. 24. And a certain Jew named Apollos,** born at Alexandria. Embedded in that portion

of the 'Acts of the Apostles' which dwells exclusively on the mission and work of Paul among the Gentiles, we find a brief narration (vers. 24-28) concerning a certain learned and eloquent Alexandrian Rabbi who had been a pupil either of John the Baptist or of one of the great forerunner's disciples. He comes, during a visit to Ephesus, under the influence of two of Paul's most devoted followers, Priscilla and Aquila the tentmakers, then dwelling in that city. Paul was then either at Antioch or already engaged in his Third Missionary Journey. The Alexandrian pupil of the Baptist, convinced by the arguments of the two friends of the Gentile apostle, associates himself with Paul's school of Christianity, and consecrates henceforth his great powers and learning to preach the gospel of the Lord Jesus as taught by Paul. A second narrative (chap. xix. 1-7) relates how Paul, closing his third missionary campaign at Ephesus, finds there a small knot of the Baptist's disciples. These he carefully instructs in all that happened subsequently to the death of the Baptist, and they too join his congregation at Ephesus.

Among a mass of materials of early Christian history, the writer of the 'Acts,' under the direction of the Holy Ghost, no doubt selected this little episode to show how the disciples of John the Baptist, widely scattered evidently, and perhaps fairly numerous, were won to that broad, world-wide school of teaching of which Stephen the Deacon was the first master and Paul of Tarsus the second master, and in some points of view the real founder. No doubt, what Luke relates as having taken place at Ephesus happened in Alexandria and Corinth and in many another great commercial centre. What Priscilla and Aquila took upon themselves to do in their master's absence, no doubt many another of the apostle's pupils undertook, and with like success.

It is highly probable that the disciples of the school of the Baptist during the third decade of the 'faith' considerably swelled the number of Christian congregations. In later days, a few of John's disciples, under the name of Zabeans, established a sect of their own, falsely asserting that, contrary to his own declaration, the Baptist was Messiah.

**Apollos**—Apollonios in one great ms., Apelles in another; perhaps the name was a contraction from Apollodorus. A native of Alexandria and a disciple of the Baptist or one of his followers, he had been no doubt a hearer, possibly a pupil, of the great Alexandrian teacher Philo, and had come some time in Paul's Third Missionary Journey to Ephesus, and as a stranger Rabbi of distinguished culture was allowed to speak publicly in the Ephesian synagogue. There he met with the Christian Jews Aquila and Priscilla, who took up and told him the story of Jesus Christ where his first master had left it.

**An eloquent man.** The Greek word *λόγιος*, rendered here accurately 'eloquent,' also has the signification of 'one learned in history,' or one generally highly cultured. The next sentence, however, shows us that 'eloquent' is here the best and most likely sense.

**Mighty in the Scriptures.** That is, of the Old Testament. This is exactly the characteristic we should look for in an able and learned pupil of Philo the Alexandrian.

Ver. 25. **This man was instructed in the way of the Lord.** The phrase 'way of the Lord' is used again in relation to the work of the Baptist (Matt. iii. 3; Mark i. 3). 'The Lord' here signifies 'Christ'; the expression thus signifies 'the doctrine of Christ.' Apollos, as John had been, was a firm believer in the Messiahship of Jesus. But Apollos and the school of John had much to learn; they had no conception that Jesus was the Messiah of the world; they only regarded Him as 'He who should redeem Israel.' The grand thought, that the dwellers in the countless isles of the Gentiles, too, were now fellow-heirs of the kingdom, was a thought which never occurred to one trained like Apollos. But a short intercourse with souls like Priscilla and Aquila, on whom a portion of Paul's broad generous spirit had fallen, threw a flood of light into the heart of Apollos, and the truth as preached by Paul flashed on him in all its length and breadth.

**And being fervent in the spirit.** Zealous, earnest in his disposition. It is better to understand 'spirit' here as used for the spirit of the man, not for the Holy Spirit of God. So Rom. xii. 11, 'fervent in spirit,' certainly must be understood.

**He spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord.** Or, as in the more ancient authorities, 'the things concerning Jesus;' that is, all he knew of the life of Jesus Christ. This no doubt included a great deal more than the mere facts of that life which happened during the career of the Baptist. It is certain that the main features of the crucifixion and the resurrection were well known to one instructed in the 'way of the Lord;' but though he knew the main facts of the gospel story, he was in ignorance of the *special teaching* which belonged to the later scenes of the Lord's life.

**Knowing only the baptism of John.** We cannot attempt to describe with any precision the amount of knowledge which this 'knowing only the baptism of John' included. As we have said above, such an one instructed as was Apollos, while knowing well the story of the great events of the life of the Holy One and just, would certainly be ignorant of much if not all of the sacramental teaching of the Lord Jesus.

He had probably never heard, or even if he had heard, only dimly comprehended the signification of the outpouring of the Spirit on the first Pentecost morning after the resurrection. Indeed, these disciples of John the Baptist (see xix. 2, 3) appear to have been in total ignorance respecting the person and office of the Holy Spirit.

Ver. 26. **And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue.** This was a usual custom with strangers. Our Lord, we know, was in the habit of thus speaking in strange synagogues, as was also Paul in the course of his many journeys.

**Whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard.** The presence in the Jewish synagogue, so long after their conversion to Christianity, of persons known to be so earnest, devoted to the faith, reminds us how close and intimate at the first were the bonds between the synagogue and the church. The Christian Priscilla and Aquila had no intention of deserting the old ancestral religion they loved so well. They were still Jews, only they knew Messiah had come.

**They took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.** It

would be indeed interesting if we could see now some document containing the exposition of 'the way of God' by Priscilla and Aquila. They had, we believe, first learned the story of the Cross and the doctrines of Jesus at Rome from some pilgrim who had most likely been present at the first Pentecost at Jerusalem. They are the earliest members that we are acquainted with by name of the Church of Rome; and besides this early knowledge of the faith, they added a deep experience of the teaching and doctrines of Paul, whose intimate friends and associates they were.

Ver. 27. **And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia.** No doubt it was to Corinth, where Apollos knew the early stories of a great and flourishing church had been laid by the very Paul of whom he had heard so much from Priscilla and her husband. He felt that *there was a great work for him to do.*

**The brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him.** It is an open question whether the Greek here should not be translated, 'The brethren exhorted him and wrote to the disciples to receive him.' One very ancient ms. (1, Beza) contains here the following remarkable reading: 'And certain Corinthians sojourning in Ephesus, after hearing him [Apollos], besought him to pass over with them into their country; and after he consented, the Ephesians wrote to the disciples in Corinth to receive the man.' This is the first instance we possess of the 'letters of commendation' which afterwards became so usual throughout the Christian Church. Professor Plumptre, in his comment on 2 Cor. iii. 1, observes on these *πιστολὰι συστάσεις* that they deserve notice 'as an important element in the organisation of the early Church; a Christian travelling with such a letter from any church was certain to find a welcome in any other. They guaranteed at once his soundness in the faith and his personal character, and served to give a reality to the belief in the "communion of saints" as the necessary sequel to the recognition of a Catholic or universal Church. It is significant of the part they had played in the social victory of the Christian Church, that Julian tried to introduce them into the decaying system of Paganism which he sought to galvanize into an imitative life' (Sozomen, *History*, v. 16).

St. Paul apparently refers to these letters of commendation granted to Apollos when about to proceed to Corinth, in his second letter to the Corinthian Church, iii. 1.

**Who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace.** The concluding words, 'through grace,' should be closely joined with 'helped them.' They were added apparently by the inspired writer of these 'Acts,' to impress on the reader that the real assistance, after all, which this eloquent and skilled man afforded to the believers of Corinth, was owing neither to his winning eloquence nor deep learning, but to the grace of God, to the Divine influence. St. Paul, with his usual generosity, bears his noble tribute to the work done by the man whom some wished to set up as his rival: 'I have planted, Apollos watered;' and, 'I have laid the foundation and another buildeth thereon' (1 Cor. iii. 6-10).

Ver. 28. **For he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, showing by the Scriptures**

that Jesus was Christ. His special training in the Alexandrian school of Philo, coupled with his great knowledge of the Old Testament Scriptures, eminently fitted the eloquent convert for the peculiar controversy which the Jewish frequenters of the synagogue delighted in. Apollos, we read, was singularly successful in convincing the Jews of Corinth,—the very men perhaps who dragged Paul to the judgment-seat of Gallio,—that Jesus was the Christ. It was perhaps the knowledge of that bitter hostile spirit to Jesus of Nazareth on the part of his countrymen at Corinth which led Apollos, conscious of his powers in such controversies, to desire this Corinthian mission. The expression 'publicly' points especially to his work in public disputations in the synagogue and elsewhere.

#### EXCURSUS ON APOLLOS.

The name of Apollos does not appear again in the 'Acts.' The episode was introduced evidently for the purpose of showing how the disciples of the Baptist joined the church of the apostles of Christ. They were without doubt very numerous, and were scattered far beyond the precincts of the Holy Land. In this short passage they are mentioned as dwelling in Ephesus and in Alexandria. Had it not been for this reason, it is doubtful if any mention of Apollos would have been made in the 'Acts.' It was, however, important to show, in the story of the origin of the Christian Church, that one of the most distinguished in the second rank among apostolical men had been carefully trained in the school of John the Baptist, and subsequently had joined a Christian church founded by and under the direct influence of Paul. We know, however, some details respecting the after career of this eminent Alexandrian Jew at Corinth, where Acts xix. 1 leaves him. He appears to have preached and taught with marked success, so much so that his name at no distant period seems to have been used at Corinth as the watchword of a party. No hint, however, is ever given to us that the slightest jealousy ever sprang up between Apollos and Paul. Instructed at the first in what we may venture to term Pauline Christianity by Paul's loving and devoted friends Priscilla and Aquila, Apollos never seems to have swerved from those doctrinal principles which at the first through the grace of God brought him to the full knowledge of the Lord Jesus. Devoted loyalty to that great master, whom he soon came to know in the flesh, seems to have been the guiding principle of Apollos' self-denying life. After he left Corinth, the scene of his successful labours, he was urged by a numerous party to return thither and again take up the thread of his eloquent and winning teaching. Even Paul, ever above all earthly feelings of wrong and jealousy, pressed him to go back, though he must have felt that the popularity and influence of the younger man would probably efface him and his name from the memory of Corinth. But Apollos the loyal and faithful positively declined to return, thinking his presence

would only fan the party spirit in the church, and would injure the influence of Paul. 'As touching our brother Apollos, I greatly desired him to come to you with the brethren: but his will was not at all to come to you at this time; but he will come when he shall have a convenient time' (1 Cor. xvi. 12). Once more we catch a glimpse of this great figure in apostolical story; in nearly the last of St. Paul's letters (Tit. iii. 13) there is a little loving mention by the aged apostle, then so near the end of his great life, of the old friend and the possible rival. The words are few and on the surface unimportant, but they complete the story of a ten years' friendship unbroken by differences of opinion, uninterrupted by jealousy or heartburning. The self-effacement of Apollos, one of the most brilliant and able of apostolical men so little known or thought of, shines conspicuously even in the pages of early Christian story, so bright with records of heroic chivalry and generous self-denial.

In this brief notice of one so little known, but who probably bore no small or undistinguished part in the work of laying the early stories of the great Christian temple, some mention would naturally be looked for of a supposition first put forth by Luther, that the unknown author of the Epistle to the Hebrews was this Apollos. The hypothesis of Luther has been widely adopted by scholars of various schools of thought in our own critical age.

The mystery which shrouded the authorship of this great epistle during the early ages of Christianity is well summarised by Origen, who exclaims, 'God knoweth who is the writer of this letter.' That so important and weighty a writing should exist, should be generally received in the churches as canonical, as proceeding equally with the Gospels and the well-known Epistles of Paul and Peter and John and James from the cabinet of the ever blessed Trinity, and yet be *nameless*, is a strange, inexplicable fact. Would it be too daring to supplement Luther's hypothesis, which ascribes the writing to Apollos, by suggesting that the silence of Apollos on the subject of his own God-inspired writing is *exactly* what we should look for from that gifted servant of God, whose life as far as we are acquainted with its details was a *life of entire self-effacement*?

His brilliant winning powers at an early date placed him in the forefront of the Christian leaders. Some men evidently preferred him, and would have made him the equal, perhaps the rival, of the greatest of the apostles. But Apollos would never hear of being the rival or even the equal of Paul.

Is it not a thought at least worthy to be entertained, that the same nobility of heart which induced the Alexandrian Apollos to decline, even at Paul's request, the mission to Corinth—where men loved him and admired him with so great a love and admiration—forbade him to put his name to his master-work, the Epistle to the Hebrews? He was Paul's pupil—his devoted friend; he would never be his master's rival.

## CHAPTER XIX.

*Certain Disciples of John the Baptist are received into the Christian Brotherhood—Paul's works at Ephesus—The tumult occasioned by the falling off in the numbers of worshippers at the Shrine of Asterius (Diana) of Ephesus.*

- 1 **A**ND it came to pass that, while <sup>a</sup> Apollos was at <sup>b</sup> Corinth, <sup>c</sup> Paul having passed through <sup>d</sup> the upper coasts <sup>e</sup> came to <sup>f</sup> Ephesus: and finding <sup>g</sup> certain disciples, He said unto them, <sup>h</sup> 'Have ye received the Holy Ghost <sup>i</sup> since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard <sup>j</sup> whether there be <sup>k</sup> any Holy Ghost. <sup>l</sup> And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto <sup>m</sup> John's baptism. <sup>n</sup> Then said Paul, <sup>o</sup> John verily baptized <sup>p</sup> with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that <sup>q</sup> they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ <sup>r</sup> Jesus. <sup>s</sup> When they heard <sup>t</sup> this, <sup>u</sup> they were baptized in the name of the <sup>v</sup> Lord Jesus. And when Paul had <sup>w</sup> laid <sup>x</sup> his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost <sup>y</sup> came on them; and they <sup>z</sup> spake with <sup>aa</sup> tongues, and <sup>ab</sup> prophesied. And all the men were about <sup>ac</sup> twelve. And he went <sup>ad</sup> into the synagogue, and <sup>ae</sup> spake boldly for the space of three months, <sup>af</sup> disputing and <sup>ag</sup> persuading the <sup>ah</sup> things concerning the kingdom of God. But <sup>ai</sup> when divers <sup>aj</sup> were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of <sup>ak</sup> that way before the multitude, he departed <sup>al</sup> from them, and separated the <sup>am</sup> disciples, <sup>an</sup> disputing daily in the school of one <sup>ao</sup> Tyrannus. <sup>ap</sup> And this continued by the space of <sup>aq</sup> two years; so that all they which dwelt in <sup>ar</sup> Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, <sup>as</sup> both Jews and Greeks. And <sup>at</sup> God wrought <sup>au</sup> special <sup>av</sup> miracles by the hands of Paul: So that <sup>aw</sup> from his body were brought unto the sick <sup>ax</sup> handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and <sup>ay</sup> the evil spirits went out of them. <sup>az</sup> Then certain of the vagabond <sup>ba</sup> Jews, <sup>bb</sup> exorcists, <sup>bc</sup> took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We <sup>bd</sup> adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth. And there were seven sons of <sup>be</sup> one Sceva, a Jew, <sup>bf</sup> and <sup>bg</sup> chief <sup>bh</sup> of the priests, which did so. And the evil spirit answered and said, <sup>bi</sup> Jesus I know, <sup>bj</sup> and Paul I know; but who

<sup>1</sup> better, 'districts.'

<sup>2</sup> The older authorities read the infinitive, not the 2d aorist participle; render then, 'and found.'

<sup>3</sup> or 'Holy Spirit.'

<sup>5</sup> better, 'But when certain.'

<sup>7</sup> The older authorities omit 'Jesus.'

<sup>8</sup> more accurately, 'no ordinary miracles.'

<sup>9</sup> better rendered, 'of the strolling Jews.'

<sup>10</sup> The older authorities read, 'I adjure you.'

<sup>12</sup> better rendered, 'Jesus I acknowledge.'

<sup>4</sup> The older authorities omit 'Christ.'

<sup>6</sup> The older authorities omit 'one.'

<sup>11</sup> a chief priest

<sup>a</sup> See ch. xviii.

<sup>b</sup> See ch. xviii.

<sup>c</sup> Cp. ch. xviii.

<sup>d</sup> Cp. ch. xviii.

<sup>e</sup> Cp. ch. xviii.

<sup>f</sup> Vers. 17, 26.

<sup>g</sup> So vers. 28,

<sup>h</sup> 34, 35. See

<sup>i</sup> ch. xviii. 19.

<sup>j</sup> Cp. ch. xi.

<sup>k</sup> 10, 17.

<sup>l</sup> So Jo. vii. 39.

<sup>m</sup> Cp. 1 Sam.

<sup>n</sup> iii. 7; ch.

<sup>o</sup> viii. 16.

<sup>p</sup> See ch. xviii.

<sup>q</sup> 25.

<sup>r</sup> See Mat. iii.

<sup>s</sup> 11. So ch.

<sup>t</sup> xiii. 24, 25.

<sup>u</sup> Jo. i. 7.

<sup>v</sup> Ch. viii. 16.

<sup>w</sup> So ch. x. 48.

<sup>x</sup> See Mat.

<sup>y</sup> xxviii. 29.

<sup>z</sup> Ch. viii. 17;

<sup>aa</sup> Heb. vi. 2.

<sup>ab</sup> Cp. ch. vi. 6.

<sup>ac</sup> Ch. x. 46.

<sup>ad</sup> See ch. ii. 4.

<sup>ae</sup> Ch. xxi. 4.

<sup>af</sup> 1 Cor. xi. 4.

<sup>ag</sup> 5, xiii. 9, xiv.

<sup>ah</sup> 13, 4, 5, etc.

<sup>ai</sup> So 1 Cor.

<sup>aj</sup> xiii. 8. See

<sup>ak</sup> ch. xi. 27.

<sup>al</sup> See ch. xiii.

<sup>am</sup> 14.

<sup>an</sup> See ch. iv. 29.

<sup>ao</sup> See ch. xvii.

<sup>ap</sup> 17.

<sup>aq</sup> See ch.

<sup>ar</sup> xxviii. 23.

<sup>as</sup> See ch. i. 3.

<sup>at</sup> See ch.

<sup>au</sup> xxviii. 24.

<sup>av</sup> Ver. 23. See

<sup>aw</sup> ch. ix. 2. So

<sup>ax</sup> 2 Pet. ii. 2.

<sup>ay</sup> Ver. 8. See

<sup>az</sup> ch. xxviii. 28.

<sup>ba</sup> Ver. 30. See

<sup>bb</sup> ch. xi. 26.

<sup>bc</sup> Cp. ver. 8;

<sup>bd</sup> ch. xx. 31

<sup>be</sup> Vers. 22, 26,

<sup>bf</sup> 27. See

<sup>bg</sup> ch. ii. 9.

<sup>bh</sup> See ch. v. 12.

<sup>bi</sup> Ch. xxviii. 2.

<sup>bj</sup> (Gk.)

<sup>bk</sup> See Mat. xiv.

<sup>bl</sup> 36

<sup>bm</sup> See Lu. xix.

<sup>bn</sup> 20

<sup>bo</sup> Mk. xvi. 17.

<sup>bp</sup> Cp. Mat.

<sup>bq</sup> xii. 27.

<sup>br</sup> Lu. xi. 19.

<sup>bs</sup> Mk. ix. 38;

<sup>bt</sup> Lu. ix. 49.

<sup>bu</sup> So Mat. xii.

<sup>bv</sup> 22

<sup>bw</sup> Cp. ch. v. 24.

<sup>bx</sup> ix. 14, 21.

<sup>by</sup> Mk. i. 24.

<sup>bz</sup> See Jas. ii. 19.

- 16 are ye? And the man in whom the evil spirit was leapt on them, and overcame them,<sup>18</sup> and prevailed against them, so that  
 17 they fled out of that house naked and wounded. And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at <sup>h</sup> Ephesus; <sup>h</sup> Vers. 1, 26.  
 and <sup>i</sup> fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus <sup>i</sup> See ch. ii. 43  
 18 <sup>h</sup> was magnified. And many that believed came, and <sup>i</sup> con- <sup>h</sup> So Lu. i. 46.  
 19 fessed, and showed their deeds. Many also of them which <sup>i</sup> Mat. iii. 6:  
 used <sup>14</sup> curious arts brought their books together, and burned <sup>h</sup> Mk. i. 5.  
 them before all men: and they counted the price of them, and  
 20 found it fifty thousand pieces of silver. So mightily <sup>m</sup> grew the <sup>m</sup> So ch. vi. 7.  
 word of God <sup>18</sup> and prevailed. <sup>xii. 24</sup>
- 21 After these things were ended, Paul <sup>n</sup> purposed in the spirit, <sup>n</sup> So ch. v. 4  
<sup>o</sup> when he had passed through <sup>h</sup> Macedonia and <sup>q</sup> Achaia, <sup>r</sup> to <sup>o</sup> (Gk.).  
 go to Jerusalem, saying, After I have been there, <sup>s</sup> I must also <sup>o</sup> 1 Cor. xvi. 5;  
 22 see Rome. So he sent into <sup>i</sup> Macedonia two of <sup>n</sup> them that <sup>o</sup> 2 Cor. i. 16.  
 ministered unto him, <sup>v</sup> Timotheus<sup>16</sup> and <sup>m</sup> Erastus; but he <sup>h</sup> Rom. xv. 26:  
 23 himself stayed in <sup>s</sup> Asia for a season. And the same time there <sup>i</sup> Thes. i. 7,  
 24 arose <sup>r</sup> no small stir about <sup>s</sup> that way.<sup>17</sup> For a certain man <sup>h</sup> See ch.  
 named Demetrius, a silversmith, which made silver shrines for <sup>xvi. 12.</sup>  
 25 Diana, brought <sup>n</sup> no small gain unto the craftsmen; Whom he <sup>h</sup> Rom. xv. 26:  
 called together with the workmen of like occupation, and said, <sup>i</sup> Thes. i. 7,  
 26 Sirs, ye know that by this craft we have our wealth. Moreover <sup>h</sup> See ch.  
 ye see and hear, that not alone at <sup>h</sup> Ephesus, but almost <sup>xviii. 12.</sup>  
 throughout all <sup>i</sup> Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned <sup>h</sup> Ch. xx. 22.  
 away much people, saying that <sup>h</sup> they be no gods, which are <sup>h</sup> Rom. xv.  
 27 made with hands: So that not only this our craft is in danger <sup>24-28. So</sup>  
 to be set at nought; but also that the temple of the great <sup>ch. xxiii. 12.</sup>  
 goddess Diana<sup>19</sup> should be despised, and her magnificence <sup>i</sup> See ch. xvi.  
 should be destroyed, whom all <sup>i</sup> Asia and <sup>c</sup> the world wor- <sup>12.</sup>  
 28 shippeth. And when they heard these sayings, they were full <sup>h</sup> So ch. xiii. 5:  
 of wrath, and cried out, saying, Great is Diana<sup>19</sup> of the Ephe- <sup>ver. 29.</sup>  
 29 sians. And the whole <sup>30</sup> city was filled with <sup>i</sup> confusion: and <sup>o</sup> See ch. xvi. 1.  
 having <sup>d</sup> caught <sup>21</sup> <sup>e</sup> Gaius and <sup>f</sup> Aristarchus, men of Macedonia, <sup>h</sup> Rom. xvi. 23?  
 Paul's <sup>e</sup> companions in travel, they rushed with one accord into <sup>2</sup> Tim. iv. 20.  
 30 the theatre. And when Paul would have entered in unto the <sup>h</sup> See ch. ii. 9.  
 31 people, the <sup>h</sup> disciples suffered him not. And certain of the <sup>h</sup> 2 Cor. i. 8.  
 chief of <sup>i</sup> Asia,<sup>22</sup> which were his friends, sent unto him, desiring <sup>h</sup> See ver. 9.  
 him that he would not adventure himself into the theatre. <sup>h</sup> Ch. xvi. 16.  
 32 <sup>h</sup> Some therefore cried one thing, and some another: for the <sup>19.</sup>  
 assembly was <sup>i</sup> confused; and the more part knew not where- <sup>h</sup> See Ps. cxv. 4.

<sup>18</sup> The older authorities, instead of 'them,' read here 'both of them.'

<sup>14</sup> better, 'which practised.'

<sup>18</sup> The older authorities, instead of 'of God,' read here 'of the Lord.'

<sup>16</sup> or 'Timothy.'

<sup>18</sup> literally, 'of Artemis (Diana).'

<sup>20</sup> The older authorities omit 'whole.'

<sup>22</sup> literally, 'also certain of the Asiarchs.'

<sup>17</sup> better, 'about the way?'

<sup>19</sup> or 'Artemis.'

<sup>21</sup> better, 'having violently seized.'

<sup>c</sup> See Mat. xxiv. 14.

<sup>d</sup> Ch. vi. 12.

<sup>e</sup> Ch. xx. 4;

<sup>f</sup> Rom. xvi. 23;

<sup>1</sup> Cor. i. 14.

<sup>h</sup> Ch. xx. 4.

<sup>i</sup> Col. iv. 10;

<sup>j</sup> Philem. 24.

<sup>k</sup> 2 Cor. viii.

<sup>19</sup> (Gk.).

<sup>h</sup> Ver. 9.

<sup>i</sup> See ch. ii. 9.

<sup>h</sup> Ch. xxi. 34.

<sup>i</sup> Ch. xxi. 31

(Gk.). So

ver. 29; ch.

xxi. 27 (Gk.).

33 fore they were come together. And they <sup>m</sup>drew Alexander out of the multitude, the Jews putting him forward. And <sup>n</sup>Alexander <sup>o</sup>beckoned with the hand, and would have <sup>p</sup>made <sup>q</sup>his defence unto the people. But when *they* knew that he was a Jew, all with one voice about the space of two hours cried out, 35 Great *is* Diana <sup>r</sup>of the Ephesians. And when the town-clerk <sup>s</sup>had <sup>t</sup>appeased the people, he said, *Ye* men of Ephesus, what man is there that knoweth not how that the city of the Ephesians is a worshipper <sup>u</sup>of the great goddess Diana, <sup>v</sup>and of the 36 *image* which fell down from Jupiter? <sup>w</sup>Seeing then that these *things* cannot be spoken against, <sup>x</sup>ye ought to be <sup>y</sup>quiet, and 37 to do nothing <sup>z</sup>rashly. For ye have brought *hither* <sup>a</sup>these men, *which are* neither <sup>b</sup>'robbers of churches,' nor yet blasphemers 38 of your goddess. Wherefore if Demetrius, and the craftsmen which are with him, have a matter against any *man*, the law <sup>c</sup>is open, and there are <sup>d</sup>'deputies': <sup>e</sup>let them <sup>f</sup>'implead one 39 another. But if ye inquire any *thing* concerning other *matters*, 40 it shall be determined in a lawful assembly. For we are in danger to be <sup>g</sup>'called in question for this day's uproar,' <sup>h</sup>there being no cause whereby we may give an account of this concourse. 41 And when he had thus spoken, he dismissed the assembly.

<sup>23</sup> *Some would render* 'the recorder.'

<sup>24</sup> *literally*, 'temple-keeper.'

<sup>25</sup> *more accurately rendered*, 'which fell from Zeus (Jupiter).'

<sup>26</sup> *or* 'contradicted.'

<sup>27</sup> robbers of temples

<sup>28</sup> *more accurately rendered*, 'the courts or tribunals are open'; *some would translate*, 'court days are held.'

<sup>29</sup> *or better rendered*, 'and there are proconsuls.'

<sup>30</sup> *better*, 'tumult.'

Ver. 1. **Paul having passed through the upper coasts.** The eastern districts of Asia Minor were known by the appellation of the upper districts or country. The English word 'coasts' is liable to mislead. So Herodotus speaks of the neighbourhood of Sardis as 'the upper (districts) of Asia.' In this term, however, were included, as in the present instance, many of the districts lying far inland. The term naturally sprang from a comparison of the more elevated regions of the interior with the low-lying country round the capital city, Ephesus.

**Came to Ephesus.** Ephesus was one of the great commercial cities of the world, singularly adapted both for inland and maritime commerce; it lay on the main road of traffic between the east and west. It possessed a capacious harbour called Panormus, formed by the river Cayster, known in Homeric story. It was built by Androclus the Athenian, and rapidly increased in wealth and magnificence. In the Alexandrian age it took a fresh departure, and became gradually a chief emporium of the world. The Romans made it the capital of the rich province of Asia, and history speaks of it as the metropolis of five hundred cities. It was the residence of a Roman proconsul, but ranked as one of the free cities of the Empire, enjoying its own peculiar form of government. Its theatre, which, notwithstanding the desolation of the once proud city, may still be traced, is the

largest which has yet been discovered, and is said to have been capable of containing some 30,000 persons; still a building capable of containing even 20,000 must have been of colossal dimensions. But the glory of the city was the stately temple of Artemis of the Ephesians (Diana), for an account of which see the note on ver. 24 in this chapter. The grandeur of Ephesus received its death-blow in the third century in the reign of the Emperor Gallianus, when it was sacked and laid waste by the Goths who came from beyond the Danube. From that time it sank gradually into decay, its commerce being eventually diverted to Constantinople. In Christian story it was famous not only for the long residence of Paul and Timothy, but subsequently it was known as the abode of the Virgin Mary, and the home of the old age of the Apostle John. The graves of Mary and of John were here. The site of the once splendid Asian metropolis is now utterly desolate. Shapeless piles of ruined edifices occupy the ground where once the great city stood; and the harbour, once the resort of the ships of all nations, is now a confused morass. Not one stone of the celebrated temple remains above another. The few remaining inhabitants are lodged in a miserable Turkish village called Ayasaluch or Asalook, said to be a corruption of Hagios-Theologus (ἅγιος θεολόγος), the name by which St. John was known.

**And finding certain disciples.** See the re-

marks on this strange incident in the note on ver. 24 of the preceding chapter. It is clear that in a sense these disciples of John the Baptist were Christians, for St. Paul's question to them respecting the Holy Ghost relates to the period since they believed (*πιστεύοντες*). But there is no question that their knowledge was imperfect even concerning the doctrine of Jesus Christ, while they knew nothing at all relating to the Holy Spirit.

Ver. 2. **Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?** The more accurate rendering is far more emphatic and clear, 'Did ye receive the Holy Ghost when ye believed?' Did its mighty influence in any way affect you at the time of your baptism? 'We are left to conjecture what prompted the question. The most natural explanation is, that St. Paul noticed in them, as they attended the meetings of the church, a want of spiritual gifts, perhaps also a want of the peace and joy and brightness that showed itself in others; they presented the features of a rigorous asceticism like that of the Therapeutæ, the outward signs of repentance and mortification, but something was manifestly lacking for their spiritual completeness' (Prof. Plumptre).

**We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.** Again here the more accurate translation of the original Greek guides us to the true interpretation of the answer of these followers of the Baptist, 'On the contrary, we did not' (at the time of our baptism) 'so much as hear whether the Holy Ghost was given.' Dean Alford renders, 'We did not so much as hear Him mentioned.' The words as rendered in the English Version are certainly likely to mislead. No Jew—and the majority, though perhaps not all, of John's disciples would have been Jews—but had heard of the Holy Spirit (see, for instance, such well-known passages as 2 Sam. xxiii. 2, 3, where the 'Spirit of the Lord' and the 'God of Israel' are interchangeable terms; compare, too, Isa. lxiii. 10, 11, 14, and lxi. 1, and a vast number of similar passages). No Israelite could possibly have been unfamiliar with the name of the 'Holy Spirit.' 'They could not have followed either Moses or John the Baptist,' says Bengel, 'without hearing of the Holy Ghost.' But they were doubtless ignorant that the Holy Ghost was already given, that His mighty influence was no longer confined, as under the old dispensation, to a few favoured individuals. They were ignorant of the first Christian Pentecost and its marvels! They knew nothing of His miraculous influences. It is not probable that they shared at all in the life of the Christian brotherhood. It was as Jews Paul found them out, members of some Ephesian synagogue, though, no doubt, his attention had been specially called to them as having been hearers of the famous Baptist or his disciples. It has been suggested that these men were the results of Apollos' preaching at Ephesus before Priscilla and Aquila found him. This is unlikely. There were, we may well conceive, followers of the Baptist in many foreign lands. His stirring call to repentance, his burning summons to Israel with the old prophetic fervour to turn again to their Lord, found a response in many a world-weary heart far beyond the desert where he preached; and as we have stated above, this whole narrative, first concerning Apollos, and now of these unknown ones, is introduced to tell us that in ways similar to the one here narrated, through the instrumen-

talities of believers like Priscilla and Aquila and Paul, the great majority of the hearers of the Baptist were brought to the full knowledge of the faith of Christ.

Ver. 3. **And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized?** 'Unto what—as the object of faith and confession—then were ye baptized?' for it is clear by your own words that you had not been baptized, to use your master John's own expression, 'with the Holy Ghost' (see Matt. iii. 11). St. Paul well knew that the faith of these disciples of the forerunner was at best but a very imperfect faith, and that the baptism of John was but an imperfect rite.

**And they said, Unto John's baptism.** They had been baptized into a faith in a coming Messiah—a Messiah who was even then on the earth—with a confession, too, of the necessity of repentance. But their knowledge of the effects of His sufferings, of the work of the precious blood, was very dim, very uncertain, and of the presence and work of the Holy Spirit they confessed that they knew nothing.

Ver. 4. **Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him.** Dr. Hackett well paraphrases Paul's reply to them: 'John, indeed, preached repentance and a Saviour to come' (as you know); 'but the Messiah whom he announced has appeared in Jesus, and ye are now to believe on Him, as John has directed.' The whole purpose of John's baptism was to prepare for another and more complete baptism, a rite far higher, and one that would confer, indeed, a grander blessing. His own words were, 'He that cometh after me shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.'

Ver. 5. **And when they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.** The willingness on the part of these followers of John the Baptist to be baptized anew in the name of the Lord Jesus, tells us that they had committed no error in doctrine, no mistake in looking upon their master John as Messiah; they confessed by submitting to the Christian rite that the baptism of John was simply provisional and preparatory. And so these passed in Ephesus, as doubtless did many another disciple of the great Forerunner in other lands, from the imperfect to the perfect Christianity, giving up nothing of their former belief, only adding to it the higher doctrines, especially those relating to the results worked by the death and resurrection of the Messiah and the later outpouring of the Holy Spirit. This verse has been the subject of much controversy among the early Protestant divines, who—to oppose the Anabaptists and out of hatred to Rome, a very positive doctrine having been laid down by the Council of Trent on the question of the difference between the baptism of John and that of Christ—have attempted to give it a very unnatural meaning. They understand it thus: 'When they—namely, the hearers of John—heard this testimony of his concerning Christ, they were baptized by John in the name of Jesus,' thus denying their re-baptism by Paul. But now that the Anabaptist danger is a thing of the past, now that decrees of the Council of Trent, if they embody an obvious truth, as is the case here, can quietly be accepted by Protestant as well as Romanist, the plain meaning of the text is generally received, and all expositors now agree that these disciples of John were re-bap-

tized with the Christian baptism. That this had taken place before is almost certain, for on the day of Pentecost we read (Acts ii. 41) how three thousand of the hearers of Peter and his companions were baptized. It is probable that among this multitude some, perhaps many, had already received the baptism of John.

Ver. 6. **And they spake with tongues.** The immediate effect of their baptism, after that Paul had laid his hands upon them, was the *visible* presence of the Holy Ghost among them manifesting itself in the form of supernatural gifts. These gifts took the form of 'speaking with tongues' and 'prophesying.' Of the last of these it is uncertain whether the miraculous influence showed itself in what we term a strange and peculiar power of preaching, an especial gift for the purpose of winning men to the side of Christ, or whether it included as well an insight into futurity, the prediction of future events; possibly both these powers were conferred on these 'twelve.'

We have very little knowledge of the gift of speaking with tongues. Not long after this incident was that famous 14th chapter of the first Corinthian letter written, which really contains all we know on this mysterious subject (the various questions have been discussed previously in an Excursus on the Pentecost Miracle of the 2d chapter of these 'Acts') which St. Paul wrote. The passage in the first Corinthian epistle was written some two years later, or two and a half years at most after this incident. He must, among other instances of the exercise of this gift of tongues, have had this special one in his mind. We can therefore lay down with some certainty the following conclusions respecting the nature of the gift then conferred on these disciples of John the Baptist:—

It did not edify any beyond the man who spoke (1 Cor. xiv. 4). To be of any service, it needed a specially gifted interpreter (1 Cor. xiv. 5-27). Men did not as a rule understand it, though God did (1 Cor. xiv. 2). He who used this gift was to those who listened to him as a barbarian or a foreigner (1 Cor. xiv. 11). It was therefore no power of speaking in a language which had not been studied in the ordinary way, but it was clearly an ecstatic utterance of rapturous devotion. There were phenomena certainly attending the first exercise of the gift on 'the Pentecost' morning (Acts ii.) which could not have been subsequently repeated; for while at 'Pentecost' the speakers were understood in their ecstatic utterances by men of various nationalities, the account of the 14th chapter of the first Corinthian epistle clearly tells us that all speaking with tongues *without an interpreter* was utterly unintelligible. This mysterious power remained, however, but a very little season among men. At a very early date in the history of the Church, it appears to have ceased altogether.

Ver. 7. **And all the men were about twelve.** Thus, out of the history of this foundation of the early Church, these men who came forward so abruptly disappeared as suddenly. The little episode is introduced to show how groups of men who were attached to an evidently widespread but imperfect form of Christianity were won over by the preaching of Paul and his school, and incorporated in the ranks of the true Church of the Lord Jesus. What happened at Ephesus in the case of Apollos and this little solitary group of followers of the

Baptist, was simply an instance of what was taking place constantly in other centres of the new faith.

*Paul's Work during the Three Years' Residence at Ephesus, 8-41.*

Ver. 8. **And he went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months:** Very short is the account which the writer of the 'Acts' gives us of the long residence of Paul at Ephesus, nearly three years altogether. It was, perhaps, the most successful period of the busy stirring career. It was a comparatively quiet time. Before it and after it were long missionary journeys, alternating with periods of comparative rest, but none for so long as this. Some seventeen years had passed since the event on the Damascus journey, and the name of Paul was known and his influence acknowledged in Jerusalem and Syrian Antioch, in the highlands of Asia Minor, in well-nigh all the great merchant cities of the Grecian and Asiatic coasts of the Mediterranean Sea. In these three quiet eventful years, not only were the foundations of the great Ephesian Church laid by Paul and his chosen companion, but also the early stories of those famous Christian congregations known as the churches of Asia as well as the churches of the Lycus, Colosse, Laodicea, and Hierapolis. These names we are well acquainted with, but no doubt the restless activity of Paul was not confined even to these. The synagogue where he first taught was doubtless the same Jewish congregation which (Acts xviii. 20) had before his Third Missionary Journey prayed him to tarry with them. Josephus tells us that there were not only numerous Jews at Ephesus, but that many of them were Roman citizens.

**Disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God.** We can form some idea of these disputes and arguments from the well-known dialogue of Justin Martyr with the Jew Trypho, the scene of which was laid at Ephesus only a few years after Paul's work in that city.

Ver. 9. **But when divers were hardened . . . but spake evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them.** It was the old story which in Paul's weary life-work had so often been enacted and re-enacted, as at Thessalonica and Corinth, and in many another centre of his devoted work. His own countrymen, either spurred on by advices from Jerusalem and the Holy Land, or themselves jealous and disturbed at the thought of the hated Gentile sharing in their loved hopes, set themselves to mar and spoil his labours. Here, as in other places, these opposing Jews seemed to have worked upon the easily excited feelings of the multitude, those of the lower class, so often discontented, usually so ripe for an uproar.

**He departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus.** Paul at once leaves the Jewish centre where he had been working, and separating his own disciples, Jew as well as Gentile, from the hostile Jews, he began daily to teach in the private synagogues, for this is most probably what the 'school of Tyrannus' was,—*Beth-Midrash* it would have been termed by the Jews, a school where rabbinical traditions were taught. Some have suggested that this was a school and lecture hall of a Greek teacher of rhetoric or philosophy hired by Paul. Professor Plumptre states the name 'Tyrannus' was not an uncommon one among slaves and freedmen, and suggests that he was a



physician, and not improbably a friend of Luke. The name Tyrannus has been found in the Columbarium of the household of Livia on the Appian Way, and as belonging to one described as a 'Medicus.' Both names and professions, he remarks, were very commonly hereditary; hence the suggestion. The Ms. Codex D (Bezae) has a very singular addition here; after the word Tyrannus or Tyrannias it reads 'from the sixth to the tenth hour,' thus particularizing the exact hour of Paul's public teaching.

Ver. 10. **And this continued by the space of two years.** We must reckon this period from the time when Paul separated the disciples from the synagogue. The 'two years' probably terminated before the events related in the 21st and following verses; the regular fixed work appears to have come to an end from the statement of ver. 22, when his stay in Asia after his disciples' departure seems mentioned as something supplementary to his long Ephesian work. Paul (chap. xx. 31) mentions his whole stay at Ephesus as a space of 'three years.'

**So that all they which dwell in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.** By Asia is signified 'Proconsular Asia;' of this rich and fertile and populous province Ephesus was the capital. The term 'Asia' is always a little vague. It sometimes includes all Mysia, Phrygia, Lydia, and Caria. But Paul probably wrote the term more in the old Homeric sense:

'In Asian meadow by Cayster's streams.'

Ephesus was a great commercial city, and people resorted to it from all parts of the surrounding country. Here the apostle would have numberless opportunities to preach to strangers as well as to the regular inhabitants of the city. The great temple and shrine of Diana also attracted a vast concourse of pilgrims; in addition to which not only the apostle, but his companions and friends, such as Aquila, Luke, Timothy, Titus, Epaphras, and others would constantly be journeying to and fro between Ephesus and the neighbouring cities laying the foundations of fresh churches. As we shall see in the 23d and following verses, the rapid growth of the Christian brotherhood in Ephesus created no little alarm among the population who lived on the commerce connected with the great shrine of the Ephesian Artemis (Diana), for the popularity of the new teaching positively told upon the number of pilgrims to the idol shrine. It was only forty years from this time that Pliny, in his famous letter to the Emperor Trajan, speaks of the swarms of Christians in the province of Bithynia (no great distance from Ephesus), of which he was governor. Numbers, he says, of all ages, of all ranks, of both sexes, not only in the cities of his province, but in the very villages and remotest country districts, were infected with this superstition (Christianity).

Ver. 11. **And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul.** 'Special,' uncommon, extraordinary, because they were performed without the personal agency and not in the presence of the apostle. A similar expression is used by Longinus when alluding to Moses as 'no ordinary man' (οὐχ ὁ τοῦτον ἀνὴρ). We have had no record of any miracle worked by Paul since he healed the possessed slave first at Philippi, some five years before (see Acts xvi. 18). What these uncommon miracles were is detailed in the next verse.

Ver. 12. **So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them.** *ἡσθάρια* (Lat. *sudaria*) are the ordinary handkerchiefs so common in use in the East, and which are used to wipe the sweat from the brows or face. The aprons, *ἐπισκήνια* (Lat. *semicinctia*), is the same word as in Luke xix. 20, John xi. 44, xx. 7, is translated 'napkin,' and seems to have been used as the term for an ordinary linen cloth. Its literal meaning, and in this sense it is used here, is an apron worn by a workman when engaged at work. Apparently the 'handkerchief and apron' used by the apostle as he worked at his tent cloths were frequently begged from him and used as a precious garment, which conveyed the supernatural gift of healing which the wearer exercised. The same uncommon miraculous power we hear of in the Old Testament, but very rarely. We might instance the cloak of Elijah, under whose stroke the Jordan waters parted; the staff or rod of Moses; the bones of Elisha; but perhaps the best instances are the miracles worked by the touch of the fringe of the Saviour's garment (Matt. ix. 20), and the shadow of Peter as he passed by (Acts v. 15). The comment of Dean Alford here is admirable: 'In this and similar narratives, Christian faith finds no difficulty whatever. All miraculous working is an exertion of the direct power of the All-powerful, a suspension by Him of His ordinary laws; and whether He will use *any* instrument in doing this, or *what* instrument, must depend altogether on His own purpose in the miracle, the effect to be produced on the recipients, beholders, or hearers. Without his special selection and enabling, *all instruments are vain*; with these, *all are capable*. In the present case, it was His purpose to exalt His apostle as the herald of His gospel, and to lay in Ephesus the strong foundation of His Church; and He therefore endues him with this extraordinary power.'

**And the evil spirits.** On these evil spirits, see note on the exorcists of the next (13th) verse.

Ver. 13. **Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits.** There were, as heathen writers tell us, numbers of these Jews in various parts of the world, who wandered about trading on the credulity of men and women, professing to be magicians, fortune-tellers, practising the exorcism of evil spirits. Among the Hebrew race there seems always to have existed a strange hankering after these dealings with unlawful arts, and we find in the Pentateuch repeated laws and enactments against these sorcerers, witches, dealers in enchantments, and the like. At the time of our Lord many of the Jewish exorcists pretended to possess a power of casting out evil spirits by some occult art, which they professed was derived from King Solomon. This legend Josephus relates in the following terms: 'God enabled Solomon to learn the art of expelling demons; he left behind him the method of using exorcism by which demons are driven away so that they never return, and this manner of cure is of great power unto this day.' These impostors, seeing with their own eyes that Paul could really do what they only pretended to do, attempted to use what they fancied was his powerful incantation; powerful it was indeed, only they were ignorant *how* that glorious name alone could be used!

Ver. 14. **And there were seven sons of one**

**Seeva, a Jew, and chief of the priests, which did so.** Many suppositions have been hazarded respecting this title of Seeva the Jew, 'chief of the priests.' Some imagine he must have been head of one of the twenty-four courses into which the priests of the Temple were divided. But surely one holding such a dignified position in the proud Hebrew hierarchy of Jerusalem, never would have stooped to the occupation of a charlatan and an impostor. Others have suggested that he was once the high priest at Jerusalem, and had been deposed, as we know was not unfrequently the case, by the Roman imperial government. But no such name appears in the list of high priests that we possess. It is more probable that the rank he held was purely a local one in the synagogue of Ephesus, a city where we should not be surprised to find, even among her most distinguished citizens, dabblers in these occult arts.

**Ver. 15. And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?** The possessed man, like the Gadarene demoniac of the Gospel, identifying himself with the evil spirits, replied: 'Jesus, whom ye invoke, I know: I know Him well, and His authority, and His power; and Paul too, the servant of the Highest, I am acquainted with; but who are ye?' 'The question was not one of ignorance, but of censure, because they arrogated to themselves what belonged not to them, and of contempt, because they considered not their own and their opponents' strength, but with rashness dared to contend with one more powerful, to whom it was mere play to overcome them' (Raphelius, quoted by Gloag).

The whole question of demoniacal possession, which comes before us on several occasions in the Gospel narrative, and again, though not so frequently, in the 'Acts,' is surrounded with difficulties. The main difficulty may, however, be summarised as follows: (1) Was that 'demoniacal possession' alluded to by the New Testament writers something peculiar to that period of the world's history, and has it since disappeared from the face of the earth? or (2) Was this terrible state, into which certain human beings had fallen, merely what is now termed 'dumbness,' 'blindness,' 'epilepsy,' and the many and varied forms of insanity?

If we accept (2), as some expositors would seem to press, we should be much perplexed when we read the very positive words on this subject spoken in the Gospel and Acts by the Saviour and His disciples. They certainly treated the unhappy ones as positively possessed by evil spirits; and on more than one occasion a dialogue was held between the Saviour and the lost spirit. On many grounds we must reject (2).

As regards (1), it does seem as though the first age of Christianity was a time—considering its extreme sensuality (never equalled in the world's history in any period), considering, too, the general absence of all religious belief, and consequently of all moral restraint—in which a more direct influence over the souls and bodies of men and women, on the part of the powers of evil, would probably exist. That there was, indeed, some such unholy influence then, we have not only the witness of the New Testament writers, but also that of Josephus, Plutarch, and other Greek authors. In

no other age do we possess such varied and ample testimony to these strange and unholy influences. Gloag well remarks, after calling attention to the fact that madness seemed to have been an inseparable accompaniment of possession, that 'we are not at all sure that it has entirely ceased in our days; at least, cases occur which bear a close resemblance to the descriptions of demoniacal possession given in the New Testament. For all that we know, such possessions may occur in our days. If we had the power of discerning spirits, it might be discovered that such cases were not unknown. . . . We live in a spiritual world; there are powers and agencies around us and within us; and in the case of mental disease especially, it is impossible to say whether the mere derangement of the physical organs or some spiritual disorder is the cause of the disease.'

**Ver. 16. And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them.** Strong, like the poor man at Gadara (Mark v. 3, 4), whom no man could bind, because the chains and fetters had been often plucked asunder by him, so now, this one, before whom the impostor exorcists were standing, threw himself in a wild fury on the wretched imitators of Paul. The reading of the older authorities, 'leaped on them, having overcome both,' seems to imply that only two of the seven sons of Seeva were attempting to cast out the evil spirit. Ewald suggests another way of rendering the Greek, and preserving the old idea of the 'seven sons,' standing before the demoniac, 'leaped on them and mastered them on both sides,' that is, when they stood before him, and afterwards from behind when they fled from him.

**Ver. 17. And this was known to all the Jews and Greeks also dwelling at Ephesus; and fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified.** In Ephesus, where hidden arts were so extensively practised, and where so many were deceived and captivated by pretended dealings with the supernatural, such a scene as the one just related would be likely to have made a deep impression. The feeling of an undefined dread at this power in a name—the name, too, the stranger Paul the tentmaker was constantly alluding to in his well-known teaching in the school of Tyrannus—stole over the hearts of many in Ephesus, such a fear as came upon all the Church in the first days, when Ananias and his wife were struck dead on account of their rash, false dealings with the unseen Power that dwelt in the brotherhood of the Lord Jesus.

**Ver. 18. And many that believed came, and confessed, and showed their deeds.** The 'fear' of the Unseen came not only upon the superstitious idolaters of Ephesus, but, as in the case of Ananias and Sapphira above related, upon the Church. It was a saddening confession, however, for the inspired writer of the 'Acts' to put down. But such a statement pleads with strange power for the truth of the whole story. St. Luke, or whoever wrote the history of the first days, never hesitates to chronicle the Church's shame as well as the Church's glory. It was indeed a humiliating confession, which told how many of Paul's converts at Ephesus, men and women who apparently had devoted their lives to Paul's Master, who had accepted with the lips, at least, the doctrine of the precious blood, had all the time been living lives and committing deeds

utterly at variance with the pure and holy religion they professed.

Ver. 19. **Many of them also which used curious arts.** This specifies the practices of some of these professing believers, notwithstanding their professions of faith. Many of these nominal Christians, some no doubt by way of trade and commerce, others because they shrank from giving up their old belief in incantation, love philtres, and other dark and superstitious arts, still while worshipping in the assembly of believers in Jesus, while repeating the solemn Christian formulas, while listening with apparent attention to the words of a Paul, no doubt while partaking in the most solemn Christian rites, — *many*, we read, still were using curious, that is, unclean, superstitious rites, such as were common in Ephesus.

**Brought their books together, and burned them before all men.** These books were, no doubt, parchment or papyrus volumes, filled with these partly Jewish, partly heathenish incantations, recipes for love philtres, formulas more or less ancient to be used in casting out evil spirits, and the like. Ephesus, we know, swarmed with magicians and astrologers; and a portion of the trade of the city, whither resorted so many pilgrims to the shrine of Diana, consisted in these works and formularies of incantation. The famous *Ἐπίσταντα γράμματα*, 'Ephesian letters' or spells, to which allusion is frequently made by heathen writers, no doubt formed part of this unholy property which these Christians, at last awakened to the knowledge of their own inconsistent lives, burned in this public fashion 'before all men.' These 'Ephesian letters' were small slips of parchment in silk bags, on which were written strange cabalistic words and sentences, mysterious and often apparently meaningless. These, men and women were in the habit of carrying about on their persons as charms or amulets to shield them from danger and from harm, or to procure them good fortune in their undertakings. We read how Cræsus, when on his funeral pile, repeated these 'Ephesian spells.' Again we are told, how once in the Olympian games an Ephesian wrestler struggled successfully with his opponent from Miletus, because he had wound round his ankle some of these 'Ephesian charms,' but that being deprived of them he was twice overthrown (Eustathius, quoted by Gloag).

**And they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver.** If these pieces of silver referred to were Jewish money (shekel), the sum would be enormous, about £7000, which would represent a much larger sum if we take into consideration the present purchasing power of money. It is, however, far more probable that in an Asiatic, or rather Grecian, city under Roman rule, the Roman denarius or Attic drachma was the piece of silver alluded to. The amount would then be roughly about £1800, this, of course, representing a much larger sum considering the diminished value of money in our day. This great amount must be accounted for by remembering that the books in question were, no doubt, of exceeding rarity, and possessed a peculiar value of their own from the precious secrets they were supposed to contain.

Ver. 20. **So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.** Somewhere about this time Paul wrote his First Epistle to the Corinthians. It is more than probable that when he penned the

words, 'For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries' (1 Cor. xvi. 9), the apostle was alluding to the events at Ephesus just related, and which led to the state of things the writer of the 'Acts' summarised by 'So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.'

Ver. 21. **After these things were ended.** 'These things were ended' probably refer to the completion of the work of laying the foundation-stories of churches in Ephesus and the neighbouring Asian cities; the public mission work, so to speak, of the Asian district for this time was complete. Some two years and three months had been spent by Paul and his companions in this work. The little society of missionaries was now broken up. Two of them, we find from the next verse, were despatched by Paul before him into Europe. He himself intended, with a diminished staff, to stay a little longer in the centre of his past scene of labours. His own prolonged stay seems to have been suggested by the events which have been related as just having taken place at Ephesus. A new opening, on the one hand, seems to have presented itself among the Heathen population, and there was also a grave necessity for consolidating and strengthening his work among many of the professing believers (see vers. 18, 19).

**Paul purposed in the spirit.** Too much emphasis must not be laid on this expression. It does not signify a direct intimation of the Spirit through a vision or by a voice. It was probably, however, owing to a secret impulse of the Spirit that he formed the purpose of this long and hazardous journey.

**When he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem.** In Macedonia and Achaia had been planted those well-loved churches of his, at Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, and Corinth. He had a twofold object in purposing to visit these congregations. The first was to stir up their faith, and correct and set in order any disorders which might be disturbing their progress and development, such as we know were at that time distracting the peace of the Church of Corinth. The second was to bring to a close the collection for the poor saints at Jerusalem. Paul evidently hoped much from this generous coming forward on the part of the Gentile churches to the help of their distressed Jewish Christian brethren at Jerusalem. He felt that such an unsought-for gift would do much to move the stubborn hearts of the jealous and exclusive party among the Jewish Christians, who still grudged with a fierce jealousy any concession which admitted the Gentiles to a share in the kingdom of God. This was the reason of Paul's deep anxiety on this subject. It is interesting to note that this relief fund, which had been in the course of collection for some time, and which Paul gathered up on this journey, and then carried to Jerusalem, was the first of the many acts of love and charity since shown by strangers to strangers for the love of Christ. This example of Paul has been followed in many an instance in the long story of Christianity. Similar acts of apparently uncalled-for generosity, which loves to be independent of race and nationality, shine bright among the evil selfish deeds of our own time.

**After I have been there, I must also see Rome.** This had been evidently a long and cherished plan of Paul's. He alludes to it very distinctly in the

Roman epistle, i. 13: 'I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you' (see, too, in the same epistle, xx. 23, 24, and 28). He must have heard much of that little faithful congregation in Rome, gathered together, we have reason to think, in those very early days which immediately succeeded the Church's first Pentecost, in the Suburra, the poor, remote quarter where the Jews of Rome mostly dwelt. Priscilla and Aquila, Paul's dearest friends, had been, before they came under the mighty influence of the Gentile apostle, members of that primitive Roman congregation, and from them he had heard, no doubt, many times of the burning faith and devotion of the poor despised brotherhood gathered under the shadow of the great palaces of imperial Rome.

Paul longed to visit them, and to endure them with some of his own ardent aspirations and high thoughts of work for the Master. The long-cherished desire of years was at length to be accomplished; and the journey, as he planned it, as far as regards the place visited, was carried out, and at length the apostle finds his ardent wish gratified, and sees Rome with his own eyes. When at Ephesus, after his successful work, he made his plans, Paul little thought how, through weariness and painfulness, he would at length reach the Rome of his dreams, but as a prisoner and in chains!

Ver. 22. **So he sent into Macedonia two of them that ministered unto him, Timotheus and Erastus.** It was at Ephesus, and about this time, that Paul wrote his First Epistle to the Corinthians. From a passage in that epistle, we learn some of the reasons why one of these two friends of Paul was sent over into Europe before his master. Of Timothy's special mission in Macedonia we know nothing, but from i Cor. iv. 17-19 we learn that this trusted companion of the Gentile apostle was directed to pass on to Corinth, to prepare the church there for the approaching visit of the apostle (ver. 19). Erastus was most likely the same as the person alluded to in Rom. xvi. 23 as the chamberlain of Corinth, and was not improbably chosen as the companion of Timothy on this difficult and delicate mission with which he was charged, on the supposition that his rank and station among the citizens would be a support to Timothy, who was the bearer of Paul's stern, grave message to his well-loved church.

**But he himself stayed in Asia for a season.** For the reason of this prolonged stay of Paul's, see note on ver. 21. He appears to have gone on with his work for several months after the effect produced by the failure of the pretended exorcist family of Sceva the priest and the subsequent burning of the precious works on magic, until the uproar excited by the panic-stricken artificers who lived on the pilgrims to the great Diana shrine. This tumult evidently cut short this renewed period of Paul's activity, and he seems to have left Ephesus and his work there with some precipitancy. It is more than probable that the state officials privately desired him to leave a city where his presence in their opinion was provocative of disorders.

Ver. 23. **No small stir about that way.** 'The way' seems to have been a term in the Christian phraseology of the first days used familiarly as a term signifying the disciples of Christ (see chap. ix.

2, xix. 9, xxii. 4, xxiv. 14 and 22). Plumptre suggests with great force that this 'name' for the disciples or their religion originated in the words in which Christ had claimed to be Himself the '*Way*,' as well as the 'Truth' and the 'Life,' or in His language as to the 'strait way' that led to eternal life; or perhaps again to the prophecy of Isa. xl. 3, cited by the Baptist, Matt. iii. 3, Mark i. 3, as to preparing the '*way*' of the Lord. Prior to the general acceptance of the term 'Christian,' it served as a convenient mutual designation by which the disciples could describe themselves, and which might be used by others who wished to speak respectfully of the 'brotherhood.' Many evidently preferred it to the opprobrious epithet of the 'Nazarenes.'

Ver. 24. **For a certain man named Demetrius, a silversmith, which made silver shrines for Diana.** The temple of Artemis or Diana, the glory of Ephesus, was built of white marble on an eminence at the head of the harbour, and was esteemed by the ancients as one of the wonders of the world. The sun, it was said, in its course saw nothing more magnificent than the temple of Diana at Ephesus. There were three temples built in succession on the spot to the goddess. Of the earliest, which was erected in the days of the Athenian colonists, we know little or nothing. The second temple was erected previous to the Macedonian reign, and its adornment was shared in by all the cities of Asia. Croesus, king of Lydia, was among those who contributed. The work was begun before the Persian war, and was slowly continued even through the Peloponnesian war; its dedication was celebrated by a poet contemporary with Euripides. On the night in which Alexander the Great, king of Macedon, was born, a fanatic named Herostratus set the buildings on fire and the temple was destroyed. It rose, however, again speedily from its ashes, and was adorned with more sumptuous magnificence than before. History tells us how the ladies of Ephesus gave their jewellery to assist in the restoration work. The citizens were never tired of adding to the grandeur and stateliness of their temple. So late as the second century, a long colonnade was built which united the fane with the city. When the Goths sacked Ephesus in the reign of Gallienus, the Diana temple was robbed of its treasures and defaced. It was never restored; and as Paganism gradually, during the third and fourth centuries, sank into disrepute and oblivion, the famous temple of Ephesus remained a deserted ruin—serving, however, as a quarry whence precious stones and marbles were hewn out for the decoration of cathedrals and churches where the God whom Paul the wandering tentmaker had originally preached in Ephesus was alone worshipped. Its stately remains are still to be found in some of the Italian churches, but more especially in the desecrated mosque of Stamboul, once Justinian's proud cathedral of St. Sophia, the metropolitan church of the East.

The temple at Ephesus dedicated to Artemis (Diana) was of vast size and of exquisite proportions, 425 feet in length and 220 feet in breadth. It was supported by columns sixty feet high. There were 127 of these pillars, each of them, we are told, the gift of a king; the folding-doors were of cypress wood; the part which was not open to the sky was roofed over with cedar; the staircase was formed of the wood of one single vine from the

island of Cyprus. In the temple treasury in its palmy days a great treasure was supposed to be laid up. A large establishment of priests, priestesses, and attendants was kept up for the service of the goddess. Provision was made for the education of the young connected with this great centre of idolatrous worship, which was visited annually by a vast concourse of pilgrims from all parts of the known world.

**Brought no small gain unto the craftsmen.**

The pilgrims worshipping at the shrine were in the habit, before they left Ephesus, of buying as memorials of their visit small models of the temple, and a shrine possibly containing a little image of the goddess. These were made in wood, and gold, and silver. The workmen of Demetrius used the last-named material. These little models of temples were very common among pagan peoples, and were termed *ἀφιδρύματα*. They were often set up in their homes on their return as objects of worship, and were not unfrequently of such a size as could be carried about upon the person, and were looked on in the latter case as charms or amulets which had the power to avert diseases and other dangers. These models were not only sold in Ephesus, but were sent as articles of traffic into distant countries. The little shrines of Diana of Ephesus are expressly mentioned by Dionysius of Halicarnassus.

**Ver. 25. Whom he called together with the workmen of like occupation.** No doubt this Demetrius, who was probably chief of the 'guild' of silversmiths, as we should say, summoned a meeting of the various trades who derived their livelihood in one way or another from the temple of Diana and the pilgrims who resorted to her shrine.

**Ver. 26. Not only at Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia, this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people.** This testimony of the 'shrine-maker' of Ephesus to the singular and rapid success of the early preaching of Christianity is thoroughly borne out by witnesses outside the New Testament writers. The words of Pliny in his letter to the Emperor Trajan have already been quoted (see the note on ver. 10). Tertullian of Carthage, at another extremity of the Roman Empire, in the far west of the north of Africa, writing towards the end of the second century, a little more than a hundred years after these words were spoken by Demetrius at Ephesus, says: 'We are a people of yesterday, and yet we have filled every place belonging to you, cities, islands, castles, towns, assemblies, your very camp, your tribes, companies, palaces,

senate, forum: we leave your temples only' (*Apologeticum*, chap. xxxvii.).

**Saying that they be no gods which are made with hands.** The comment of Professor Plumptre on these words of the 'shrine-maker' is admirable. 'The wrath of the mob leader leads him virtually to commit himself to the opposite statement that the idol is the god. Philosophers may speak of symbolism and ideal representation, but this was and always has been and will be the conclusion of popular idolatry.'

With these strange sad words of the idol artificer should be compared the striking picture of an idol image made to be worshipped, painted by Isa. xlv. 9-18. The enthusiasm, however, here displayed for the maintenance of the old religion was based upon the most sordid feelings. The master-worker of these makers of the silver shrines feared that if the old religion fell into

disrepute, his craft would be brought to nought, there would be an end to his gains. It is true that in the next verse another and a more disinterested plea is put forward to excuse his vehement appeal to his fellow-citizens. It is, however, evidently only an after-thought.

**Ver. 27. But also that the temple of the great goddess Diana should be despised, and her magnificence should be destroyed, whom all Asia and the world worshippeth.** This temple was popularly called 'the temple of Asia.' The month of May was consecrated to the goddess 'Artemis of the Ephesians;' all kinds of games



Diana of the Ephesians.

and contests were celebrated in the city annually during this month, which became a national Ionian festival. Crowds from the neighbouring cities were in the habit of being present at these games and religious ceremonies. The officials who presided over these great festivities were elected annually by the whole province (see note on ver. 31). It was scarcely to be wondered at that popular indignation was so quickly aroused, when it seemed probable that Ephesus might lose through the influence of the foreign preacher Paul all this splendour. It was no difficult matter to show its tradesmen and citizens how the commerce of the place would suffer if strangers were no longer attracted to the shrine of Artemis and to the festivities held in her honour.

**Ver. 28. Great is Diana of the Ephesians.** 'Great' (*μεγάλη*) was a special title belonging to the Ephesian Artemis. The 'idol' itself shrined in the magnificent temple, to which all this strange homage was paid during so many centuries,

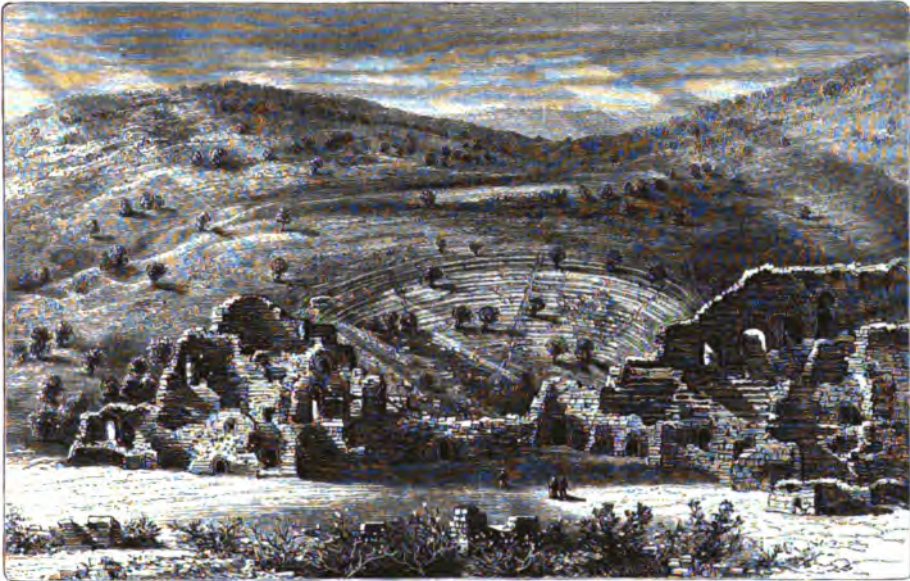


was very different to the fair form of the huntress Diana with which we are so familiar in Grecian art—a rude, fourfold, many-breasted female figure ending below the breasts in a square pillar curiously carved with ancient symbols of bees, and corn, and flowers. Black with age, the venerated image was more like a Hindoo than a Greek idol. In common with other prized images, it was reputed to have fallen from heaven. The history of the idol is lost in remote antiquity. It evidently had survived the burning of the temple by Herostratus. Probably the early Greek colonists in Ionia found it, a relic of a bygone worship, and adopted by them as their national idol.

Ver. 29. **And the whole city was filled with confusion.** We can well understand how easily, when it was reported that a hitherto despised company of foreign Jews—for as such the Christians of the first century were necessarily regarded—were engaged in a conspiracy to dis-

credit the worship of the goddess which was the source of the fame and wealth of their city, a vast crowd of Ephesians of all ranks and callings would rapidly be gathered together, and how soon the city would be disturbed by their excited questionings and cries.

**And having caught Gaius and Aristarchus, men of Macedonia.** Gaius is the Greek equivalent for the well-known Latin name of Caius. Three other persons called 'Gaius' are mentioned in the New Testament: Gaius of Derbe, Acts xx. 4; Gaius of Corinth, 1 Cor. i. 14; Gaius of Ephesus, to whom the Third Epistle of St. John was addressed. Aristarchus accompanied Paul on his journey to Jerusalem (Acts xx. 4) which ended in his arrest by the Romans. He was with Paul in the memorable voyage which terminated in the shipwreck off Melita (Acts xxvii. 2). He seems to have been the apostle's companion during his first imprisonment at Rome, as he is men-



Ruins of Theatre at Ephesus.

tioned in the Epistle to the Colossians, chap. iv. 10, and in the little letter to Philemon, ver. 24. Subsequent history speaks of him as suffering martyrdom with Paul, and by a similar death. There is another tradition which alludes to him as Bishop of Apamæa.

**They rushed with one accord into the theatre.** The theatre of Ephesus was of vast size, and capable of accommodating, according to the usual computation, at least 20,000 persons. These mighty buildings were used not only for dramatic representations, but also for great shows of gladiators, who fought sometimes one with the other, sometimes with wild beasts. They were also favourite meeting-places for the citizens when on any momentous occasion they were called together. This was the custom in Greek, not in Roman cities.

Ver. 30. **The disciples suffered him not.** Paul with his customary chivalrous courtesy would not suffer his 'companions in travel' to be exposed to danger without his being at their side to defend

them. He wished, too, to plead the Christian cause, so unwarrantably attacked, before the people of Ephesus. 'But the disciples'—no doubt men of Ephesus converted by Paul, who knew well their countrymen's feelings on the subject of their goddess—would not suffer the brave-hearted man to expose himself so uselessly to a deadly peril.

Ver. 31. **And certain of the chief of Asia.** Literally, 'Asiarchs.' These officials were ten in number, chosen annually to superintend and preside over the games and festivals held in honour of the emperor and the gods. They were selected from the cities of Proconsular Asia, generally, according to Strabo, from Tralles, as the citizens of that place were reckoned among the most wealthy in Asia. Upon these men fell the expense of providing these costly games—the hiring gladiators, the importing of wild beasts, and many other smaller expenses. The games of Ephesus were termed the Artemision, and were held in the month of May in honour of Diana

(Artemis) of the Ephesians. It is generally supposed that one of these ten was selected as president, but that the total expenses incurred were shared among the ten. We read, not many years after this uproar in the Ephesian theatre, of another *Asiarch*, 'Philip,' being asked at Smyrna to let loose a lion on Polycarp, and declining to do so.

**Which were his friends.** It has been often observed in the course of St. Paul's anxious, toilsome life, how singularly courteous, even friendly to him were so many of those in high official position with whom he was brought into contact; for instance, the great Roman officials in Cyprus and in Achaia, Sergius Paulus and Gallio, Felix and Festus in Caesarea, these chiefs of Asia; the centurion who had charge of Paul in the voyage of the 27th chapter. It is, however, probable that among these 'Asiarchs' were some secret members of the brotherhood of Christ, and that these influenced their colleagues. Paul's influence, we know, must have been very great, and his Master's religion had already struck deep root in Ephesus and the neighbouring Asian cities; Christian converts were by no means confined to the lower stratum of society.

**Ver. 32. Some cried one thing and some another.** Evidently this is a 'memory' of some one who was present. A vast concourse of people had been gathered together, all moved by some vague sense of injury, but all uncertain what the injury was, or what they really desired to bring about. The trade of their city was suffering, the number of pilgrims to the shrine of the national goddess was falling off, and these pestilent foreign Jews in some way or other were the cause. The meeting was turbulent and the speeches pointless and angry. There seemed a high probability of the assembly resulting in a general riot. Now this, as we shall see, would have worked grave injury to the city in the eyes of the powerful rulers in Rome.

**Ver. 33. And they drew Alexander out of the multitude, the Jews putting him forward.** The abrupt way in which this man is introduced into the narrative by the writer, seems to indicate that 'Alexander' was no unknown name to the brethren of the Church of the first days. There was no need to enter into any details. The readers contemporary with the writer of the 'Acts' all evidently knew 'Alexander' the Jew who would have spoken on the day of the Ephesian meeting when Demetrius stirred men up against Paul and the Christians.

If we identify him with that 'Alexander the copper-smith' whose bitter and relentless hostility to Paul won him that solitary notice in the last epistle of the apostle (see 2 Tim. iv. 14), then the abrupt mention here of 'Alexander' is explained, —all would at once recognise the deadly foe of the Gentile apostle, who subsequently acquired so painful a notoriety among the Christians.

The Jews on this occasion, well aware of the dislike and mistrust with which they were generally regarded by the Gentile populations among whom they dwelt, fearful lest they—as was only too probable—should be confounded with Paul and his disciples, put forward one of their people to explain to the Ephesians that the Jews, far from being inculpated with Paul and his school, hated these men with a hatred equal to or even greater than theirs. If, as we suppose, this

man was identical with Alexander the copper-smith, his trade might have led him into certain relations with Demetrius and his fellow-craftsmen who also worked in metal.

**Ver. 34. But when they knew that he was a Jew.** The old Gentile hate of the Jews at once flames out. His features, his foreign accent probably, and his dress told of his nationality, and the crowd refused to hear him, no doubt confounding him with the friends of Paul.

**All with one voice about the space of two hours cried out, Great is Diana of the Ephesians.** This strange repetition was no mere tumultuous cry; nor was it only an expression of fervid loyalty to the goddess, whose shrine they thought made Ephesus rich and prosperous; but it was no doubt an act of worship. Compare a similar procedure on the part of the worshippers of Baal in the days of Ahab and Jezebel, who 'from morn even until noon cried, saying, O Baal, hear us!' (1 Kings xviii. 26), and see Matt. vi. 7. The custom of the Mohammedans and the worshippers of Brahma in India to this day is well known, and they often for entire days practise these vain senseless repetitions.

**Ver. 35. And when the town-clerk had appeased the people.** This official was a personage of great importance in these free Greek cities. He was a magistrate whose functions in some respects corresponded to those fulfilled by the recorder of modern times in England. His immediate duty consisted in the guardianship and tabulation of the state paper and archives of the city, and in drawing up the public records, and in sending them out to the public civic assemblies. This officer also was authorised to preside over public gatherings of the citizens. We find the name *γραφικαίος* (recorder) engraved on marbles set up as memorials of some public ceremony. It seems probable that this office was a permanent one, unlike that of the Asiarch, which merely lasted a year. This would account for the 'town-clerk' addressing and dismissing the people. His influence was no doubt greater than even the presiding Asiarch of the year. There is a strong contrast between the effect of his words on the people and that of 'Alexander the Jew.' The people evidently listened with all attention to the harangue of the 'town-clerk,' and seemed at once to have dispersed at his request.

The city of Ephesus is a worshipper of the great goddess Diana. The Greek word rendered 'worshipper' is a remarkable one (*ναιάβος*). Its literal meaning is 'temple-sweeper' (Lat. *adi-tus*). It answers to the Christian 'Sacristan,' originally a title of one employed in the lowest offices connected with a temple. Its connection with the divinity supposed to dwell within the hallowed walls of the fane, invested the appellation with an unearthly dignity; and the proudest cities became eager to appropriate a title which seemed to connect them in a peculiarly close relation with the deity of whose earthly house they were the recognised guardians. So in the case of great and magnificent Ephesus, the city's proudest title to honour was its loving care for the worship of the great Artemis (Diana). It assumed the title *ναιάβος*, paraphrased rather than translated by 'worshipper,' and we find it constantly on the city coins. This singular title was assumed not unfrequently by individuals who claimed to have rendered special services to the goddess or her temple. So, for instance, the Roman Emperors

Hadrian, Elagabalus, Caracalla, and Geta, each styled himself the *neokoros* of the Ephesian Artemis. The better MSS. omit the Greek equivalent for 'goddess,' the 'great Artemis' of Ephesus being so well known as to need no prefix of goddess. We find some Ephesian inscriptions in which she is described as 'the greatest,' 'the most high.'

The appeal of the 'town-clerk' to his fellow-citizens to preserve order would at once conciliate every Ephesian heart by this ready and graceful allusion to the well-known favourite appellation of the city. It was as though he said, 'My fellow-citizens, why imperil your cherished privileges and affront Rome by an unseemly uproar about a question which after all no sensible man could ever entertain; for, does not all the civilised world know how loyal Ephesus is to her great protecting goddess? These strange men—these poor, shabby, homeless Jews—can never shake our allegiance to and the world's belief in that mighty Artemis there,' no doubt pointing to the proud and stately temple in full view of the crowded audience.

Of the image which fell down from Jupiter. Like many other venerated idols of the old Pagan world, the strange and hideous statue of the Ephesian Artemis was supposed to have fallen from the skies. In like manner tradition ascribed a heavenly origin to the Diana of Tauris, the Minerva (Athene), Polias of Athens, the Ceres of Sicily, the Cybele of Pessinus, and the Venus of Paphos; to these we may add the Palladium of Troy and the Ancile at Rome. It is not improbable that some of them may have been meteoric stones, possibly employed by the sculptor in ancient times, when he was shaping the idol.

Ver. 36. Ye ought to be quiet. The 'town-clerk' seems to be throughout his harangue intensely anxious that his city should not through any riotous behaviour incur the displeasure of Rome.

Ver. 37. Neither robbers of churches. This rendering is liable to mislead the modern reader. In the time when the English Version was made, it was by no means unusual to style a heathen temple a 'church' or a 'chapel.'

Nor yet blasphemers of your goddess. Deeds of violence belonged to an age long subsequent to the apostles. To undermine the Pagan religions, they adopted other means than pillage or destruction. St. Paul's address to the Athenians on the Hill of Ares (Mars) was an instance of his treatment of the ancient superstition. He hurt no ancient prejudices, no time-honoured customs, by rude invective. He was no blasphemer of the ancient gods of Greece and Rome, but led men to the knowledge of the truth by gentle but far more effective means. We can imagine the painful surprise with which St. Paul would read the coarse language and the bitter, angry eloquence of one like Tertullian. St. Paul and his immediate followers no doubt owed not a little of their wonderful influence over men's hearts to their winning

and graceful courtesy, to their chivalrous consideration for the feelings of others. Paul's Master, on whom the great disciple modelled his ways of life, was ever gentle to those utterly ignorant of the truth. His fiery wrath was especially reserved for those who knew their Lord's will and only pretended to do it.

Ver. 38. If Demetrius and . . . have a matter against any man, the law is open. It was clear that these men with whom Demetrius and his fellow-craftsmen were so incensed had committed no crime of which public cognisance would be taken. If some trade law, some civic regulation, had been infringed, let Demetrius and the others proceed against Paul and his friends. Demetrius would be sure of all sympathy and even favour in such a trial in which the prosperity of the city was involved. 'The law is open;' literally, 'court days are now going on.' Ephesus was what we should now term an assize town, and the Roman officials held courts at intervals in all these. It was also an *urbs libera*, and had its local courts and magistrates. It is not improbable but that the words of the town-clerk signified, 'At this instant the proconsul is on circuit, and is just now at Ephesus.'

There are deputies. Literally, 'there are pro-consuls.' In the time of Paul, 'Asia' being a senatorial province, was governed by a proconsul. The only difficulty in the term is, that it is in the plural ('proconsuls'), while only one of these officials held office in the senatorial province. It has been suggested that the term includes the proconsul and his assessors. It is, however, more probable that the term is used in a general sense, as we should say, 'The province of Asia, with its capital Ephesus, is governed by proconsuls.'

Let them implead one another. This is a legal technical phrase in the original Greek, as in the English.

Ver. 39. It shall be determined in a lawful assembly. The crowd of citizens he was then addressing was simply a popular gathering; their decisions could have no weight. Such a meeting would only tend to damage the city in the eyes of the Roman government. The 'lawful assembly' (*ekklesia*) was one formally summoned. A free city like Ephesus had the right to call such a meeting together for the purpose of deliberation.

Ver. 40. For we are in danger to be called in question for this day's uproar. Men of the rank of the 'town-clerk' of Ephesus well knew how probable it was that a tumultuous meeting which endangered the public peace would be inquired into by the Roman officials. The prized liberties of their city might in consequence have been forfeited. There was a Roman law which made it a capital offence to raise a riot. 'Qui cœtum et concursum fecerit capitale sit' (Seneca, *Controv.* iii. 8). 'Qui cœtum et concursum fecerit capite puniatur Sulpicius Victor' (*Instit. orat.*, quoted by Gloag).



## CHAPTER XX.

*Paul revisits Macedonia and Greece—He returns to the Holy Land by way of Troas and Miletus—At Miletus he addresses the Elders of Ephesus.*

1 **A**ND after the uproar was ceased, Paul called unto *him*<sup>a</sup> the disciples, and *embraced them*,<sup>b</sup> and *departed* for to go  
2 into *Macedonia*. And when he had gone over those parts, and had given them much exhortation, he came into Greece,  
3 And *there*<sup>c</sup> abode three months: and *when*<sup>d</sup> the Jews laid wait for him,<sup>e</sup> as he was about to sail into *Syria*, he purposed to  
4 return through *Macedonia*. And there accompanied him into *Asia* Sopater<sup>f</sup> of *Berea*; and of the *Thessalonians*,  
*Aristarchus* and *Secundus*; and *Gaius* of *Derbe*, and *Timo-*  
5 *theus*;<sup>g</sup> and of *Asia*, *Tychicus* and *Trophimus*. These  
6 going before tarried for *us* at *Troas*. And we sailed away from *Philippi* after *the* days of unleavened bread, and came  
unto them to *Troas* in five days; where we abode seven days.  
7 And upon *the* first *day* of the week, when *the* disciples<sup>h</sup> came together to *break bread*, Paul *preached* unto them,  
ready to depart on the morrow; and continued *his* speech until  
8 midnight. And there were many *lights* in *the* upper cham-  
9 ber, where they<sup>i</sup> were gathered together. And there sat in a  
*window* a certain young man named *Eutychus*, being fallen  
into a deep sleep: and as Paul was long *preaching*, he sunk  
down with sleep, and fell down from the third *loft*,<sup>j</sup> and was  
10 taken up dead. And Paul went down, and *fell* on him, and,  
embracing *him*, said, Trouble not yourselves; *for* his life is in  
11 him. When he therefore was come up *again*, and had *broken*  
bread, and eaten, and talked a long while, *even* till break of day,  
12 so he departed. And they brought the young man *alive*, and  
were not a little comforted.  
13 And we went before to ship, and sailed unto *Assos*, there  
intending to take in <sup>k</sup> Paul: for so had he appointed, minding  
14 himself to go afoot.<sup>l</sup> And when he met with us at *Assos*, we

<sup>a</sup> The older authorities, before the words 'embraced them,' insert 'having exhorted them.'

<sup>b</sup> literally, 'a conspiracy being laid against him by the Jews as he was about,' etc.

<sup>c</sup> more accurately, 'as far as Asia;' some very ancient authorities omit these words altogether.

<sup>d</sup> The older authorities, after 'Sopater,' read 'the son of Pyrrhus;' render, 'Sopater of Berea, the son of Pyrrhus.'

<sup>e</sup> or 'Timothy.'

<sup>f</sup> The older authorities omit the words 'the disciples,' and insert 'we;' render then, 'when we gathered together.'

<sup>g</sup> The older authorities here, instead of 'they,' read 'we;' render, 'where we were gathered together.'

<sup>h</sup> better rendered, 'from the third storey.'

<sup>i</sup> more accurately, 'the youth.'

<sup>j</sup> literally, 'to take up.'

<sup>k</sup> better, 'to go by land.'

<sup>a</sup> Vers. 7, 30.

<sup>b</sup> See ch. xi. 26.

<sup>c</sup> Ch. xxi. 6.

(Gk.). Gk.

not as ver. 10.

<sup>d</sup> 1 Cor. xvi. 5.

<sup>e</sup> See ch. xvi.

12.

<sup>f</sup> Ch. xviii. 23.

(Gk.).

<sup>g</sup> See ch. ix. 23.

<sup>h</sup> Rom. xv. 25.

<sup>i</sup> See ch. xviii.

18.

<sup>j</sup> Vers. 16, 18.

<sup>k</sup> See ch. ii. 9.

<sup>l</sup> Ch. xvii. 10.

13.

<sup>m</sup> See ch. xvii. 1.

<sup>n</sup> See ch. xix.

29.

<sup>o</sup> See ch. xiv. 6.

<sup>p</sup> See ch. xvi. 1.

<sup>q</sup> Eph. vi. 21;

Col. iv. 7;

<sup>r</sup> 2 Tim. iv. 12;

<sup>s</sup> Tit. iii. 12.

<sup>t</sup> Ch. xxi. 29;

<sup>u</sup> 2 Tim. iv. 20.

<sup>v</sup> See ch. xvi.

10.

<sup>w</sup> See ch. xvi. 8.

<sup>x</sup> See ch. xvi.

12.

<sup>y</sup> See ch. xii. 3.

<sup>z</sup> 1 Cor. xvi. 2.

<sup>aa</sup> So Rev. i. 10.

<sup>ab</sup> Ver. 11;

<sup>ac</sup> ch. ii. 42, 46;

<sup>ad</sup> 1 Cor. x. 16,

<sup>ae</sup> xi. 20-24.

<sup>af</sup> See ch. xvii.

17.

<sup>ag</sup> Rather as

Mat. xxv. 1,

etc. So

Jo. xviii. 3;

Rev. iv. 5,

viii. 10.

<sup>ah</sup> See ch. i. 13.

<sup>ai</sup> 2 Cor. xi. 33.

<sup>aj</sup> 1 Kings xvii.

19 (Engl.).

<sup>ak</sup> So 1 Kings

xvii. 21; 2

Kings iv. 34

<sup>al</sup> So Mat. ix.

24.

<sup>am</sup> Ver. 7.

15 took him in,<sup>13</sup> and came to Mitylene. And we sailed thence, and came the next *day* over against Chios; and the next *day* we arrived at Samos, and tarried at Trogyllium;<sup>14</sup> and 'the next *day* we came to Miletus. For Paul had determined to sail by<sup>15</sup> Ephesus, because he would not spend the time in Asia: for he hasted, if it were possible for him, to be at Jerusalem 'the day of Pentecost. And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called 'the elders of the church. And when they were come to him, he said unto them,

Ye know, 'from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons, Serving the Lord "with all humility of mind, and *with* many<sup>16</sup> tears, and temptations, which befell me "by the lying in wait<sup>17</sup> of the Jews: And how 'I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have showed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, 'Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, 'repentance toward God, and 'faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. And now behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the *things* that shall befall me there: Save that 'the Holy Ghost<sup>18</sup> witnesseth<sup>19</sup> in every city, 'saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. But "none of these *things* move me, neither "count I my life dear unto myself,<sup>20</sup> so that I might 'finish my course 'with joy,<sup>21</sup> and 'the ministry, which I have received 'of the Lord Jesus, to 'testify 'the gospel of the grace of God. And now behold, 'I know that ye all, among whom I have gone 'preaching the kingdom of God,<sup>22</sup> 'shall see my face no more. Wherefore 'I take you to record this day, that 'I am pure from the blood of all men. For 'I have not shunned to declare unto you all 'the counsel of God. 'Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all 'the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost<sup>17</sup> hath made you "overseers, 'to feed the church of God,<sup>23</sup> which he

c Cp. Phil. i. 25.

d Ver. 20 (Gk.).

e See Lu. xvii. 3.

f See 1 Cor. x. 32.

d Ch. xxviii. 31.

e Cp. Jer. xxvi. 2.

f So 1 Tim. iv. 16.

g Phil. i. 1; 1 Tim. iii. 2; Tit. i. 7; 1 Pet. ii. 25 in the Gk. So 1 Pet. v. 2.

e Ver. 38.

f Lu. vii. 30; ch. xiii. 36.

g So Jer. iii. 15; Lu. xii. 32; Jo. xxi. 15-17; Eph. iv. 12.

h So 1 Pet. v. 2.

f See Rom. x. 2.

g So ch. ii. 23; Eph. i. 11.

h So Tit. i. 3.

i Cp. ch. xxvi. 16-18.

f See ch. xviii. 6.

g See ch. i. 17.

h Gal. i. 1.

i So Tit. i. 3.

j Cp. ch. xxvi. 16-18.

k Cp. ver. 32.

<sup>13</sup> better, 'we took him up.'

<sup>14</sup> Many, but not all the old authorities omit the words, 'and tarried at Trogyllium.'

<sup>15</sup> better, 'past Ephesus.'

<sup>16</sup> The older authorities omit the word 'many' before 'tears.'

<sup>17</sup> literally, 'by the plots (or conspiracies) of the Jews.' 'or' 'Holy Spirit.'

<sup>18</sup> The older authorities insert after 'witnesseth' the words 'to me.'

<sup>19</sup> There is a slight difference in the reading of the more ancient authorities here, according to which the rendering of this passage would be, 'but I esteem my life of no account, as if it were precious to myself.'

<sup>20</sup> The words 'with joy' are omitted by the majority of the oldest authorities.

<sup>21</sup> The majority of the oldest authorities, after 'the kingdom,' omit the words 'of God.'

<sup>22</sup> The evidence of the oldest authorities is nearly equally balanced between church of God' and 'church of the Lord.' See notes on pages 478-9.

29 hath \*purchased ° with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall † grievous wolves enter in among you, 30 not sparing the flock. Also ° of your own selves shall men arise, speaking † perverse *things*, to draw away † disciples after 31 them. Therefore † watch, and remember, that *by the space of* † three years I ceased not † to warn every one † night and day 32 † with tears. And now, brethren, † I † commend you to God, and to † the word of his grace, which is able to † build *you* up, and to give you † an inheritance among all them which are 33 sanctified. † I have coveted no *man's* silver, or gold, or 34 † apparel. Yea, ye yourselves know, that † these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and † to them that were with 35 me. † I have showed you all *things*, how that † so labouring *ye* ought to † support † the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.

36 And when he had thus spoken, he † kneeled down, and 37 prayed with them all. And † they all wept sore, and † fell on 38 Paul's neck, and kissed him, Sorrowing most of *all* for the words † which he spake, † that they should see his face no more. And they † accompanied him unto the ship.

c Ver. 35. So 1 Sam. xii. 3; 1 Cor. ix. 11, 12; 2 Cor. vii. 2, xi. 9, xii. 13, 17; 1 Thes. ii. 5; 3 Jo. 7.  
 d So 1 Tim. ii. 9 (Gk.). e See ch. xviii. 3. f Ch. xix. 22, 29.  
 e Ver. 35. So 1 Sam. xii. 3; 1 Cor. ix. 11, 12; 2 Cor. vii. 2, xi. 9, xii. 13, 17; 1 Thes. ii. 5; 3 Jo. 7.  
 f 1 Jo. i. 54 (Gk.). So 1 Thes. v. 14. Cp. 1 Cor. xii. 28. g See ch. vii. 60.  
 m See Lu. xv. 20. n Ver. 25. o See ch. xv. 3.

g So 2 Thes. iii. 7  
 See Eph. iv. 28.  
 i Cp. 2 Tim. i. 4.

22 better, 'the disciples.'

24 The older authorities omit 'brethren.'

25 better rendered, 'ye ought to assist the weak.'

26 better, 'which he had spoken.'

*Paul's Journey through Macedonia—He remains at Corinth (probably) three months, and then returns by way of Philippi to Asia, 1-6.*

Ver. 1. And after the uproar was ceased, Paul called unto him the disciples, and embraced them, and departed for to go into Macedonia. There is no evidence to show that the apostle's departure was caused, though it might have been hastened by the tumult which had taken place on account of the supposed slight shown by St. Paul and his friends to Artemis (Diana) of the Ephesians. He had already (see vers. 21, 22 of preceding chapter) determined to leave Ephesus, and the words of the writer of the 'Acts' here simply tell us that he waited until quiet was restored in the city, and then set out on the journey which he had previously resolved to make. For some reason to us unknown, the compiler of this history is very brief here, and passes over without a word a very important period in St. Paul's life. We are able, however, without difficulty to fill up the gap left in the narrative of the 'Acts' from scattered notices in the epistles, especially from the second letter to the Corinthians.

From Ephesus, St. Paul seems to have gone by land direct to Alexandria Troas; there he waited anxiously (2 Cor. ii. 12) for the arrival of Titus,

whom he had sent to Corinth on a mission, partly connected with the great collection then being made by the Gentile churches for the relief of their suffering Hebrew brethren in the mother Church of Jerusalem, partly on account of the grave disorders which were then existing in the turbulent and powerful Corinthian brotherhood. But Titus' coming was delayed, and the anxious apostle sailed to Europe in the hope of meeting him, and passed over from Troas to Macedonia. At Philippi, the old scene of his labours, then a flourishing and devoted Christian community, it is most probable (see Conybeare and Howson, *St. Paul*, chap. xvii.) he met at length his trusted disciple, and received much comfort from the news which Titus brought him from Corinth and its church.

The Second Epistle to the Corinthians was written evidently from Philippi. Charged with this letter, Titus was sent back again to Corinth. Freed from his pressing anxiety about the state of his loved Corinthian Church, St. Paul at once resumed his missionary labours, and besides visiting the cities on the western side of Macedonia on the shores of the Ægean, journeyed far in the East, on the Adriatic coast, and as we read in the Roman epistle, 'fully preached the gospel of Christ round about unto Illyricum' (Rom. xv. 19).

Ver. 2. And when he had gone over those parts, and had given them much exhortation, he came into Greece. That is, when St. Paul had visited the cities Philippi, Berea, Thessalonica, etc., on the eastern or *Ægean* side of Northern Greece or Macedonia, and had preached his Master's gospel on the eastern or Adriatic coast, roughly termed Illyricum, he came into the southern province, here termed 'Hellas' (Greece), that is to say, into the Roman province of Achaia; and here he at once sought out its principal city, his old home and scene of former labours, the great western centre of the Christianity of the first days, Corinth.

Ver. 3. And there abode three months. With these few words the writer of the 'Acts' refers to this second and shorter residence of the apostle in his old Corinthian home. Much had happened in that restless, busy centre since his first long stay, when he laid the foundation stones of the church there. He had been absent some three years, and in that period in the Christian community at Corinth had taken place, as the church increased, the disputes concerning the Lord's Supper; the heart-burnings excited by party attachments to one or other of the early Christian leaders,—himself, Peter, and Apollos; the agitation occasioned by the immoral and impure lives lived by professing members of the brotherhood. The duty of relieving and assisting brothers and sisters unknown and living in far countries, but professing the same faith; and the general duty of almsgiving, and other questions connected with doctrine and life and ritual, which have in all the Christian ages agitated and often perplexed the Church of Christ, had been prominently brought before the Corinthian congregations. And on all these questions he had given them advice, exhortation, and warning, by messages despatched through true and trusty friends, such as Timothy and Titus; by grave and weighty letters written under the influence of the Holy Spirit, such as the First and Second Corinthian Epistles, letters which have served as handbooks to the practical Christian life for eighteen hundred years; and now he was come among them once more to watch the result of his work. During the 'three months' of his stay at Corinth, St. Paul wrote the great epistle to the Roman Church. The Galatian letter *possibly* was written, too, at this time; but it seems more likely that this shorter letter, in which the main arguments of the letter to the Church of Rome were first sketched out, was written during the stay at Ephesus in the course of the preceding year.

And when the Jews laid wait for him, as he was about to sail into Syria. We are not informed as to the nature of this plot formed against St. Paul by his unhappy countrymen. All through his busy, anxious life their terrible and sleepless hostility dogged his footsteps. Their machinations usually took the form of intrigue with the local authorities or with the people of the city, where the apostle was working; but at times their intense hatred took a more active shape, and they made use of certain fanatics of their race, and attempted by violent means to cut short the detested career of him they persisted in looking upon as the bitterest foe to the Jewish traditions. See for other murderous attempts of this kind, chap. ix. 23-29, at Damascus and Jerusalem; and at a later period again at Jerusalem, chap. xxiii. 12. It was most likely that the Jews on this occasion, becoming

aware of St. Paul's intention to sail from Cenchrea, one of the ports of Corinth (Phoebe, Rom. xvi. 1, the bearer of the epistle to the Roman Church, was a deaconess of the church of this place, which was in fact a seaside suburb of populous Corinth), watched the harbour in order to surprise him and kill him. There were many Jews resident in this seaside quarter of the great city engaged in commerce. It was to this harbour that most of the ships sailing between Greece and Asia belonged. Their occupation would give them peculiar influence over the captains and owners of all trading vessels, and from these they doubtless heard of the apostle's intentions. But the plot was discovered, and St. Paul determined to proceed northwards by land, through Macedonia by way of Philippi.

Ver. 4. And there accompanied him into Asia, Sopater of Berea; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timotheus; and of Asia, Tychicus and Trophimus. Of these companions of the apostles three were natives of Macedonia and four of Asia Minor. In the older mss. Sopater is described as (the son of) Pyrrhus; this was possibly added to distinguish him from the Sosipater (the same name as Sopater) mentioned in Rom. xvi. 21, a kinsman of St. Paul. Nothing is known of him further. The name, however, occurs in an inscription still existing in Saloniki (Thessalonica), probably of the date of Vespasian, as belonging to one of the politarchs of that city. Aristarchus had been associated with St. Paul at Ephesus (chap. xix. 29). Secundus is not mentioned elsewhere. Professor Plumtree ingeniously suggests that this Secundus, together with Tertius in Rom. xvi. 22, and Quartus (Rom. xvi. 23), were all three sons of a disciple who had adopted this plan of naming his children.—Gaius of Derbe. So styled to distinguish him from another companion of St. Paul with the same name, who belonged to Macedonia (chap. xix. 29). Derbe was a small city of Lycaonia, in Asia Minor, near to Lystra (see chap. xiv. 6).—Timotheus. The well-known pupil and disciple of St. Paul, to whom in after days the two epistles bearing his name were addressed. It is not improbable that these two here named together, coming from the same neighbourhood, were friends and comrades.—Tychicus. The name which means 'fortunate' is represented by the Latin 'Felix.' He was probably a native of Ephesus. We hear of him several times in early apostolic history. He was the bearer of the epistles to the Colossians and Ephesians from Paul, then a prisoner at Rome, to those distant churches (see Col. iv. 7, 8; Eph. vi. 21, 22), and he is styled 'a beloved brother and a faithful minister of the Lord.' In the last epistle of his brave, good life, St. Paul tells Timothy 'he had sent Tychicus to Ephesus' (2 Tim. iv. 12). Tradition tells us he became Bishop of Chalcedon in Bithynia.—Trophimus. The last-named of this company of St. Paul's friends, we know, accompanied the apostle on this journey all the way to Jerusalem, and was the occasion there of his arrest (Acts xxi. 29). Trophimus, too, is mentioned in the Second Epistle to Timothy (chap. iv. 20), 'Trophimus have I left at Miletus sick.' Early tradition tells us this friend and associate of St. Paul had been one of the seventy disciples, and suffered martyrdom under Nero. It is, however, very doubtful if any of the 'seventy' belonged to an

alien race, to which Trophimus, from the circumstance related in chap. xxi. 27-30, certainly appears to have belonged. It has been asked why these seven companions of the apostle are so carefully enumerated in this case. The supposition that they acted as a bodyguard to St. Paul, and that they were seven in number, to correspond with the number of the deacons (chap. vi. 3-5), must be dismissed as purely fanciful. They were, no doubt, messengers of their several churches deputed to carry the contributions of the Gentile congregations to the poor saints of Jerusalem. St. Luke, the compiler of the history of the 'Acts,' as we shall see in the next verse, at this juncture rejoined the apostle, and the narrative now indicates from its minuteness that the writer was present at the scenes described. We can easily conceive that the names of the persons of this little company with which he found himself so intimately associated were graven on the mind of the compiler of the memoir.

**Ver. 5. These, going before, tarried for us at Troas.** Here the language of the narrative (see remarks on the preceding verse) suddenly changes from the third person to the first. Briefly to recapitulate, the close personal connection of Luke and Paul appears to have dated from the years 51-52. They were together evidently from the time of the arrival of Paul at Troas (chap. xvi. 8); they crossed over together into Europe, but when Paul left Philippi (xvi. 40), the physician-friend of the great apostle was left behind in that city, and it has been supposed that the Evangelist made Philippi the centre of his work for several years. Here again at Philippi, after the lapse of some six or seven years, the beloved physician again joins his friend and master. The rest of the narrative of the 'Acts' is told us by an eye-witness of the various events recorded. We may therefore conclude with certainty that from this time, that is, from the arrival at Philippi (A.D. 57), till Paul was entrusted to the charge of the soldier at Rome (A.D. 62), Luke was never separated from his beloved master (see also note on xvi. 10).

Two reasons have been, with much probability, suggested for Paul remaining at Philippi, while his companions went on before him to Troas. The first, that they should make all possible arrangements for the gathering of the disciples of Troas and the neighbourhood to meet the apostle; and the second, that Paul might keep the Passover feast with all quiet solemnity. We know he was ever anxious to conciliate his countrymen, and whenever he could do so without sacrifice of principle. The presence of his Gentile companions who went on before him into Asia (Troas), would have been an hindrance and a stumbling-block to him on this occasion, when he, no doubt, hoped to win some of his dearly-loved brother Jews to the side of his Master Christ.—'For us,' that is, for Luke and Paul.

**Ver. 6. And came unto them in Troas in five days.** This lengthy voyage was, no doubt, owing to contrary winds, or perhaps to a calm. On a former occasion, we read of this voyage being made in two days (see xvi. 11).

*The Journey to Jerusalem—The Communion Feast and Miracle at Troas, 7-12.*

**Ver. 7. And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together.** This was evidently no accidental coincidence. This meeting

together of the disciples on the first day of the week, because Paul was about to depart on the morrow. *The particular day*—'the first day of the week'—need not have been mentioned if it had only been a farewell gathering for the old teacher to share in. We have here an unmistakable allusion to the practice, which began evidently immediately after the resurrection of the Lord, of assembling on the first day of the week for religious purposes (see Excursus A., 'On the Universal Observance of Sunday by the Early Christians,' at the end of this chapter).

**To break bread.** This solemn assembly of disciples met together evidently for no ordinary meal. The 'breaking bread' can only signify the Lord's Supper, the communion of the body and blood of Christ, which, in these early days, seems to have been generally united with the Agape or love-feast. Well-nigh all commentators, Protestant and Roman, are agreed that this is the signification of this expression. The ceremonial took place on the first day of the week, as Alford remarks, 'in the evening, after the day's work was ended; and at the end of the assembly, after the preaching of the word.'

**Paul preached unto them.** Thus, in this early period of the Church of the first days, the liturgical order was much the same as that developed and elaborate service which has come down to us after eighteen centuries. The disciples came together; and the especial object of their assembling was then, as now, the celebration of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper; then, as now, the prayers and sermon preceded the solemn breaking of bread.

**And continued his speech until midnight.** The assembly was held at night; this was the ordinary practice among the early Christians. The 'breaking of bread' in the Holy Communion followed, at this early period of the Church's history, the 'Agape' meal. It seems that this brotherhood on 'the Lord's day,' after the day's work was ended, met together, partook of the simple evening meal, after which prayer and preaching of the word followed; and before they separated, each Christian shared in the solemn breaking of bread, in compliance with their dear Master's last command the evening before His death on the Cross.

**Ver. 8. And there were many lights in the upper chamber, where they were gathered together.** All the little details of this memorable scene are carefully recorded; the very appearance of the brilliantly-lighted upper chamber; the lateness of the hour; the length of Paul's sermon. The writer, Luke, had just joined his loved master again, and naturally all the circumstances which accompanied the first remarkable event which took place after their reunion, stamped themselves on the 'beloved physician's' mind. The many lamps mentioned had no special significance; the Jews were accustomed, on their festal days, brilliantly to light their rooms for any great solemnity. The fact is probably mentioned to account for the sleep of Eutychus, which, no doubt after the fatigue of a long working day, was induced by the heat of the crowded, lit-up room.

**Ver. 9. And there sat in a window a certain young man named Eutychus, being fallen into a deep sleep: and as Paul was long preaching, he sunk down with sleep, and fell down from the third loft, and was taken up dead.** 'The place was an upper room, with a recess or balcony

projecting over the street or the court. The night was dark : three weeks had not elapsed since the Passover, and the moon only appeared as a faint crescent in the early part of the night. Many lamps were burning in the room where the congregation was assembled. The place was hot and crowded. St. Paul, with the feeling strongly impressed upon his mind that the next day was the day of his departure, and that souls might be lost by delay, was continuing in earnest discourse, and prolonging it even till midnight, when an occurrence suddenly took place which filled the assembly with alarm, though it was afterwards converted into an occasion of joy and thanksgiving. A young listener, whose name was Eutychus, was overcome by exhaustion, heat, and weariness, and sank into a deep slumber. He was seated or leaning in the balcony, and falling down in his sleep, was dashed upon the pavement below, and was taken up dead' (Conybeare and Howson, *St. Paul*). It should be remembered that in the East the windows, which were usually closed only by lattice-work, are large, and mostly reach down to the floor, resembling rather a door than a window. This window was, doubtless on account of the heat, wide open. In the high, narrow streets of eastern towns, the upper storey is often used for social purposes, partly as removed from the noise of the street, partly as being more open to the air. Nothing further is known of this Eutychus ; the name was by no means an uncommon one.

**And was taken up dead.** The words here are perfectly plain, and positively do not admit of any 'watering down.' The facts related are perfectly simple, and admit of no explanation but one.—The young man fell from the great height of a third storey on to the hard ground, or more probably pavement, below, and was killed by the fall. The words of the apostle in the next (10th) verse, 'Trouble not yourselves ; for his life is in him,' may well be compared to the words of Paul's Master, when *He* raised from the dead the little daughter of Jairus, of whose death no expositor has ever doubted : 'Weep not ; she is not dead, but sleepeth' (Luke viii. 52). To the Lord her death, though real, was yet but as a sleep, out of which He was come to awaken her ; and the servant, in this case, was conscious of possessing for a moment the same strange power which belonged to his Divine Master.

Ver. 10. **And Paul went down, and fell on him, and, embracing him, said, Trouble not yourselves ; for his life is in him.** The example here of Elijah when he restored to life the dead son of the widow of Zarephath (1 Kings xvii. 21), and of Elisha when he raised from the dead the only child of his kind Shunammite hostess (2 Kings iv. 34), is here closely imitated by this other favoured servant of the Eternal God. The accurate and vivid picture given us here by the compiler of the 'Acts,' tells us how lasting an impression the whole scene made upon the companion of Paul. Professor Plumptre strikingly calls attention to the unruffled composure of the apostle, sure of his prayer for power to restore life in this instance being granted, contrasted with the hurry and terrified confusion of the dismayed bystanders : 'The whole scene is painted vividly by an eyewitness. We have to think of the cries of alarm, the rush of men down the staircase from the third



Gateway at Assos.

floor with lamps and torches in their hands, the wail of sorrow . . . the undisturbed calmness of the apostle, sure that his prayer was answered.'

Ver. 11. **When he therefore was come up again, and had broken bread, and eaten.** The 'breaking of bread,' the solemn conclusion to the long service of prayer and exhortation, doubtless had been interrupted by the accident to Eutychus. The bread was, in these early 'communions,' literally broken. 'The loaf, probably a long roll, was placed before the

celebrant, and each piece was broken off as it was given to the communicant' (Plumptre).

Ver. 12. **And they brought the young man alive, and were not a little comforted.** As in the case of the little daughter of Jairus, when the Lord commanded that something should be given to her to eat at once, so here evidently some special care and attention was given to the young man that nature might be recruited, and that the awful shock which the system had suffered might be recovered from. Stress should be laid on the word 'alive,' as standing with the word 'dead' in ver. 9. His friends and fellow-worshippers 'were not a little comforted' by the restoration to life again of one whom they were already mourning for as dead ; but their joy was doubtless greatly increased by the powerful witness to the truth of their belief which such a notable miracle afforded. They felt, then, these Christians of Troas, in a way possibly they had never felt before, that, when two or



three were gathered together, there the Lord was indeed in the midst.

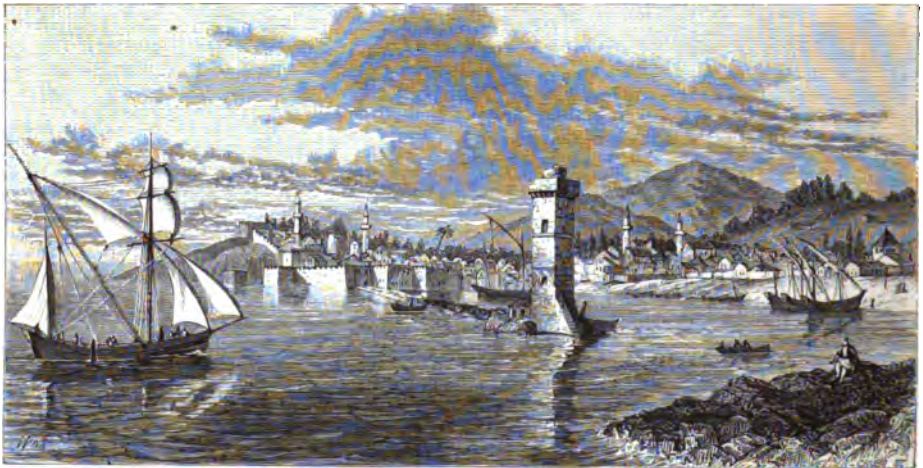
*St. Paul pursues his Journey to Jerusalem—From Assos he sails along the Coasts of Asia—On his Arrival at Miletus he sends for the Elders of the Church of Ephesus, 13-17.*

Ver. 13. And we went before to ship, and sailed unto Assos, there intending to take in Paul: for so he had appointed, minding himself to go afoot. Luke, the compiler of the 'Acts,' and the other companions of the apostle, on the day succeeding the memorable night spent in the upper chamber with the Christians of Troas, went on board and sailed for the south, Paul determining to join the ship at Assos, only some twenty miles distant by road from Troas, but the voyage round Cape Lectum was nearly twice as far. He wished, perhaps, to secure a few more hours with his disciples at Troas, and also a quiet, solitary time of meditation as he went alone by the road to the point where he had fixed to join the ship and his friends. He doubtless, in these solitar hours.

pondered over the subjects of that famous farewell address he was about to deliver to his friends, the elders of the Ephesian congregation he loved so dearly. Assos is called by Pliny Apollonia; it was a seaport of Mysia, and thus was reckoned in Proconsular Asia. Its modern name is Beahrahm. Vast ruins still mark the site of the ancient city, and speak with silent eloquence of its bygone importance.

Ver. 14. And when he met with us at Assos, we took him in, and came to Mitylene. Mitylene is about thirty miles from Assos, and is the capital of the island of Lesbos. Horace styles it 'fair Mitylene' (*Epist.* i. 11-17). It is famed for its beautiful situation and the magnificence of its buildings. It was the birthplace of Sappho and the poet Alceus. The modern city on the same site is called Castro.

Ver. 15. And we sailed thence, and came the next day over against Chios. Chios was an island off the coast of Ionia, celebrated for its wine. It was the scene of the massacre of the Greeks by the Turks in 1822. Chios was famous, even among



Mitylene.

these fairest regions of the earth, for its marvellous beauty. There was a modern Greek proverb which spoke of the modern Sciots in language akin to that used by Paul, when writing to Titus of the Cretes (*Tit.* i. 12): 'It were easier to find a green horse than a sober-minded Sciote.'

And the next day we arrived at Samos. This island was only separated from Lydia by a narrow channel.

And tarried at Trogyllium. This was the name of a city and a promontory between Ephesus and the mouth of the Meander, at the foot of Mount Mycale.

And the next day we came to Miletus. Miletus was one of the most famous names in remote history; it was more ancient than its modern rival Ephesus, which had, however, in Paul's day, far outstripped it in wealth and grandeur. Homer writes of 'Carian Miletus.' It had sent out as many as eighty colonies. But for a long period before St. Paul visited it, it had been gradually sinking in importance, and then ranked only among the second-rate cities of that populous sea-

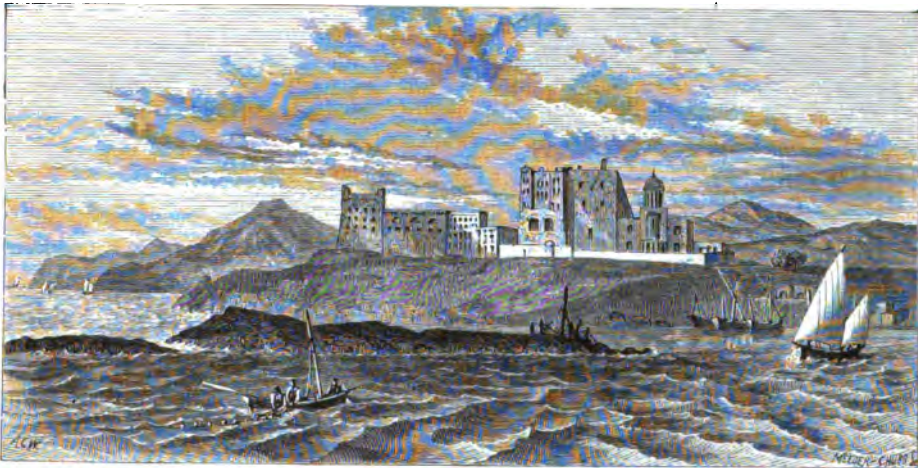
board of Asia. It is now a swamp, with but few ruins to mark the site of the once-famed city. Miletus lay some thirty miles to the south of Ephesus.

Ver. 16. For Paul had determined to sail by Ephesus, because he would not spend the time in Asia; for he hasted, if it were possible for him, to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost. The apostle had, when at Trogyllium, been much nearer Ephesus than he was when the ship anchored at Miletus; but the stay at Trogyllium had not exceeded a few hours, while at the more important harbour of Miletus, doubtless several days were spent. It must be borne in mind, that the great apostle and his companions were but humble passengers on board this trading vessel. He would not himself revisit the old scene of his two years' labour, lest the many friends and their pressing solicitations, and the varied questions they would of course have laid before him, should have delayed his voyage; and there was barely sufficient time before him to reach the Holy City in time for the Pentecost feast, so he sent the message to Ephesus

which we read of in the next (17th) verse. There were several urgent reasons which prompted him to be present at Jerusalem during the coming festival. He knew such a mark of respect for the sacred Hebrew custom would be pleasing to the stricter Jewish Christians. He was also especially desirous to present the generous gifts contributed by the Gentile churches to their distressed brethren of the Holy City in presence of the vast concourse of foreign Jews who would, of course, be present at the great Pentecostal feast, and thus spread abroad in all lands the great fact that even the Gentile members of the new and suspected sect of Christians loved, with a deep love, their Jewish brethren who dwelt under the shadow of the temple on Mount Zion, and refused to separate themselves from them, although they were all the while too conscious that the chosen people grudged, with a strange unreasoning jealousy, the share in His eternal kingdom, which the risen Crucified Master had given to the dwellers in the isles of the Gentiles.

Ver. 17. **And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus,**

**and called the elders of the church.** The elders or presbyters here summoned to hear the parting address of their old master, probably represented several congregations of Ephesus and its neighbourhood. St. Paul had, we know, for a long period made Ephesus his headquarters, and no doubt at this time there were a large number of professing Christians in the Church of this great and populous city. In ver. 28 of this chapter, these elders or presbyters are spoken of as *episcopoi*, bishops or overseers. It is quite clear that in the lifetime of Paul, the names *episcopos*, *presbyteros*, bishop and presbyter (or elder), were applied indifferently to the same person. This is quite evident from the language of the pastoral epistles of this same apostle. In the lifetime of St. Paul, no necessity had arisen in the constitution of the Church for the appointment of a special order of superintending presbyters. While Peter, and Paul, and John, and the majority of the apostolic body were still living, these filled the place of general superintendents of the churches. But, though this fact is indisputable,



Samos.

there is not a shadow of doubt but that the episcopal office, as we understand it, was constituted *before the close of the first century*, for *very early in the second century* we find this higher order widely established.

Professor Rothe of Heidelberg (quoted by Bishop Lightfoot of Durham in his *Commentary on the Philippians*) concludes that the Episcopate was established shortly after the deaths of St. Peter, St. Paul, and St. James, who suffered martyrdom nearly at the same time, all shortly before the fall of Jerusalem. The pillars of the Church being thus removed by death, and Jerusalem the visible centre of the Church being destroyed, there was an urgent need for some organization which should cement together the diverse elements of Christian society now so rapidly increasing, and preserve it from disintegration.

Out of this need the Catholic Church, in its Episcopal character, arose. From notices in Eusebius, Irenæus, and Clement of Rome, Professor Rothe (quoted by Lightfoot) concludes 'that, immediately after the fall of Jerusalem

(A.D. 70), a council of the surviving apostles and first teachers of the gospel was held to deliberate on the crisis, and to devise measures for the well-being of the Church. The centre of the system thus organized was Episcopacy, which at once secured the compact and harmonious working of each individual congregation, and, as the link of communication between the separate brotherhoods, formed the whole into one undivided Catholic Church. Recommended by this high authority, the new constitution was immediately and generally adopted.'

*St. Paul's Farewell Address to the Elders of the Church at Ephesus, 18-38.*

In this short epitome of the discourse of the apostle on the occasion of his bidding farewell to his old Ephesian friends and fellow-workers, we have perhaps the most interesting of all the reported sermons and addresses of the 'Acts.' Whereas these, for the greater part, are largely occupied with allusions to the burning questions of the time, such as the relation between Judaism and



that new development of the old sacred Hebrew religion, Christianity; the relation, again, between Christianity and Paganism; the foundations upon which the religion of Jesus Christ were based, the argument especially used to Jewish and Gentile peoples,—this famous *précis* of the address, or at least of part of the address, uttered at Miletus by the loving founder of the Ephesian congregation to the elder officials of that church, deals with broad and general questions connected with the duties of a pastor to his flock not only in the age of Paul, but in all times and among all peoples. The references to his own history are few, and just enough to give a living personal interest to the exhortation; but they are quickly dismissed, and the words might have been addressed by a Christian minister to his people in our own days.

It may be styled a *précis* of part of the original discourse, for, in its present brief form, it cannot contain anything like the variety of subjects touched upon by the apostle. Nor can it be supposed, even of that portion of the original address which

it represents, to reproduce anything more than a brief abstract. Still the inspired compiler of the 'Acts,' with rare skill, has woven into his report of Paul's words here many of the apostle's well-known phrases. We feel we are indeed reading here a *résumé* of one of Paul's most earnest and impassioned sermons—one, too, written down by a listener on the memorable occasion, on whose mind the wondrous thoughts uttered on that morning had left an impression never to be effaced.

The address falls easily into three divisions:—(1) Treats very briefly of the speaker's former connection with the Ephesian community, to whose representatives he was then speaking; to this he just adds a few words explanatory of his present hurried journey (vers. 18–24). (2) Contains very earnest warnings to his old flock, together with grave forebodings of their future perils (vers. 25–31). (3) The apostle dwells on his own self-sacrificing labours among them—labours utterly unrequited, as they knew well. This is the spirit in which they, if they would be true pastors, should themselves work (vers. 32–35).



Miletus.

*A Paraphrase of the Address to the Ephesian Elders.*

DIV. I. Vers. 18–24. 'For a long period of time, as you know, have I lived among you, building up the Christian brotherhood of Ephesus, all the time serving the Lord with all humility, often sorely afflicted and bitterly tempted, the afflictions and temptations both coming to me through the instrumentality of my own countrymen the Jews. But I never shrank from encountering these trials, no dread of man ever hindered me from working for the salvation of the Christian brotherhood. In my teaching you will remember how I laid as the foundation stories of a Christian life the two guiding principles of my Master's religion—a change of heart and thus a return to God, joined with faith in the Lord Jesus. The dear brotherhood of Ephesus I am prevented now from personally visiting, for I am constrained by an overpowering sense of duty to go up at once to Jerusalem—a visit full of grave danger to me, I know for certain, because solemn warnings from

the Spirit of the Lord have been lately constantly telling me of the deadly perils which await me there. But I feel I *must* go; my duty to my Master calls me there, and obeying *that* high summons I can afford to disregard my life, which I thus put, I am well aware, in extreme peril. A soldier of Christ must be ready to risk life and everything in his Lord's service, that is, if he would finish his course with joy and win his crown.'

DIV. II. Vers. 25–31. 'I am very urgent then in pressing home to you, the elders of those congregations to whom I have so long preached the kingdom of God, not to forget the example I have set you of brave, disinterested, devoted love, for I feel I shall never look on your faces again. Remember I have done my part, I am innocent of the blood of these men of Ephesus if the punishments denounced upon the unrepentant sinner fall on any member of our flock. Take heed lest the guilt of neglect fall on you—you, the guides and pastors now. Remember how for my part I have never shrunk from declaring the purpose and the will of God.'

'This grave responsibility of warning and guiding now passes to you elders; see then that *your* lives are pure, and watch well over the lives of that flock whose teachers you are. A precious charge indeed are these sheep of whom you are the appointed shepherds. They belong to that Church of the Living God which He purchased—O awful mystery!—with the tremendous ransom of His own blood.

'Yes, take heed and watch these poor sheep well, for I foresee, only too surely, after I am removed from the scene, teachers of a different school, more like ravening wolves than shepherds, coming from other cities, will take my place in my flock of Ephesus; and even among yourselves in after days will some arise—perverse teachers who will attract many from the right way. Ay, watch well yourselves and those committed to your charge, that dear flock for which I watched with such intense solicitude—with many a secret tear—during three long, anxious years.'

**Div. III. Vers. 32-35.** 'Now, brothers, I commend you and your church—a precious deposit indeed—to God and to His Word, who is able to raise you from strength to strength, and in the glad end to give you each your share in the Redeemed One's glory.

'Follow my example. I have coveted no man's silver or gold or apparel. See these toil-worn hands of mine; they have kept me; yes, and have helped many others too. How often have I told you in words and shown you by my life that God's ministers ought with their own hands ever to help the weaker! Did not the Master once say, "*It is more blessed to give than to receive*"?''

**Ver. 18. Ye know, from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons.** The words of Samuel to the people of Israel after the election of King Saul present a most striking parallel to this farewell speech of Paul (see 1 Sam. xii. 2-5).

**Ver. 19. Serving the Lord . . . with many tears.** Three times in this short report of Paul's farewell words at Miletus are 'tears' referred to: tears of suffering and pain (ver. 19); tears of pastoral solicitude (ver. 31); tears of natural affection and friendship (ver. 37). See also 2 Tim. i. 4; 2 Cor. ii. 4; Phil. iii. 18; and also Acts xxi. 13). The intense sympathy and love among the early Christians is most noteworthy. It was something strange and fresh in the old selfish world, and this sweet spirit which seemed *after* the crucifixion to have taken up its abode in the hearts of men and women, was no doubt one of the most powerful agents in the rapid spread of the new doctrines. The revelation that *God* could so care for men as to *weep* (John xi. 33-35) for them, taught men the glorious beauty of mutual sympathy. Paul's intense sorrow for 'souls that will not be redeemed' has been imitated and copied faithfully by many a noble heart in the long eventful story of Christianity.

Ages before, the sore need of this sympathy had been felt and dimly groped after, but never found, and therefore never imitated. See, for instance, in that moving scene which closes the *Hippolytus* of Euripides. In the midst of his extreme suffering, Hippolytus addresses Artemis (Diana) with

'(Divine) Mistress, do you see me, how wretched I am?'  
And the goddess answers,

'I do; but it is wrong for these eyes of mine to shed a tear.'—*Hippolytus* of Euripides, 1395, 1396, edit. Dindorf.

A God who could 'weep with those that weep' was a sublime conception to which the old heathen world was never able to attain.

Lucretius, who lived some three-quarters of a century before the Christian era, coldly though very grandly expressed the same view of the disregard of the immortals for human woes and sufferings (see, for instance, *De Rerum Natura*, Book i. 57-62); while in Juvenal, who wrote *after* the Son of man had come and had begun to change the whole tone of thought even of the heathen world, we see, or perhaps rather feel, the dawn of the new day (see, for instance, Juvenal, *Satire xv.*).

**Which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews.** There is no special mention of a plot against the life and liberty of the apostle during the Ephesian residence; their hostility is, however, alluded to in Acts xix. 9. No doubt at Ephesus, as at Corinth, Thessalonica, Antioch in Pisidia, and Jerusalem, the same sleepless, relentless hostility on the part of a section of his countrymen marred and hindered his work.

**Ver. 20. Have taught you publicly.** Three months, we read, he taught openly in the synagogue, and two years in the school (an open and no doubt well-known lecture hall) of Tyrannus.

**Ver. 21. Repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.** These two make up the sum of all Christian doctrine—a change of heart, and then a return to God and faith in the Lord Jesus.

The one cannot be separated from the other. True faith cannot exist without the sorrowful heart. Again, repentance without faith in Christ is without comfort or hope, and ends too surely in faint-heartedness and despair. All efforts at self-redemption have been found again and again utterly useless.

**Ver. 22. And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things which shall befall me there.** Some commentators have understood these words as though Paul was constrained by the 'Holy Spirit' to journey to Jerusalem, in other words, 'was going to Jerusalem on the impulse of the Holy Spirit.' It is better, however, to refer the words 'in the Spirit' to Paul's own spirit; for in the following verse we have the word *πνεῦμα*, *spirit*, apparently distinguished from 'spirit' in this verse by the epithet *τὸ ἅγιον*, *the holy*, in the English Version rendered 'Holy Ghost.' The meaning here without doubt is, 'Urged by an intense sense of duty, Paul was going up to the Holy City.' He was so persuaded that this was right, that no prospect of danger deterred him, no urgent affectionate entreaties moved him from his purpose.

He was ignorant what the dangers were which too surely would meet him. He only knew that some terrible trial certainly awaited him in that city. The Holy Ghost in some mysterious way had forewarned him of this.

**Ver. 23. Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me.** Such warnings as these here referred to as having happened in the past, do not seem to have been unfrequent in these early days of Christianity. 'The gift of prophecy' appears to have been no uncommon possession in the days of

the apostles. Like other miraculous powers, it gradually seems to have passed away from the Church. These powers were evidently of rare occurrence during the lives of the generation which immediately succeeded the men who had looked on the face of Jesus, and after a comparatively brief interval, contemporaneous history is silent altogether on the subject—the power had passed away from men. For similar instances of such warning prophetic voices at Tyre and at Cæsarea, see Acts xxi. 4, 10, 11.

The voice of the Holy Ghost, which apparently came to the prophets of the Church of Antioch on the occasion of the dedication of Barnabas and Saul (Acts xiii. 1-4), was another instance of this prophetic work on the part of the Holy Ghost. Paley (*Horæ Paulinæ*, Romans) calls attention to Rom. xv. 30, where the apostle beseeches the Roman Christians to strive together in their prayer for him, that he might be delivered from them who do not believe in Judæa. Such a sorrowful foreboding was probably written down in Corinth after one of those prophetic intimations here referred to: '*The Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city.*'

Ver. 24. But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself. 'We note the parallelism with Luther's famous declaration when warned by his friends not to go to Worms, "*I will go thither, though there should be devils on every house-top*"' (Professor Plumptre).

So that I might finish my course with joy. The same words and the same thought re-occur in the Second Epistle to Timothy, only there the goal was in sight, and Paul wrote, 'I have finished my course' (2 Tim. iv. 7).

An interesting thought has been suggested by vers. 22-24. It must be remembered, however, that it is *only* a supposition. Paul has been speaking with a sad presentiment of the things which shall befall him in Jerusalem; prophets enlightened by the Holy Ghost tell him that bonds and afflictions await him; he himself attaches no value to his life, and knows that the congregation which he has founded shall see him no more. It seems as though it had been determined in the counsels of God that Paul should be allowed to die in Jerusalem as a martyr, but that God had graciously looked at the tears and intercessions in behalf of the apostle on the part of all the Gentile congregations, and in compliance with their many earnest prayers had allowed him to be rescued by the Romans with a view to several years more of life and ministry.

Ver. 25. And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more. Here Paul expresses his own conviction that he will no more look in life on the faces of his Ephesian brothers in the faith. But it is *almost* certain that after his liberation from the Roman imprisonment spoken of in Acts xxviii., the apostle did revisit the Asian churches (see the notices and greetings and directions in 2 Tim. iv. and in Tit. i. 5, especially the words, 'Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick,' 2 Tim. iv. 20). We must, however, by no means suppose that even an apostle was gifted at all times with Divine and unerring knowledge. Here it is almost certain he was mistaken in his foreboding.

To give another instance of this partial ignorance on the part of men of apostolic dignity, there is no doubt but that Paul and others of the

same sacred company looked for the coming of the Lord in their own lifetime. We can even trace the gradual fading away of these fond hopes of the Christians of the first day, who only came gradually to see that the return of the Master in judgment was no event of the immediate future, but that the time of His coming was hid in the dim far future.

Ver. 26. Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. The thought and language here was one familiar to Paul. He derived it from the well-known words of the prophet Ezekiel, 'When I say unto the wicked, They shall surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand' (Ezek. iii. 18). He, Paul, as they well knew, was innocent of all neglect. His ceaseless, self-denying labours among the people at Ephesus would at least free him from that blood-guiltiness. If any man perishes, I am not myself guilty.

Ver. 27. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. The counsel of God is His counsel of redemption and grace, and the universality of His redeeming work; and all this he had not only declared in his teaching, but also by his example and life. It has been suggested with considerable probability that the words 'all the counsel of God' point to a greater degree of receptivity for Divine truth than had been found elsewhere; so he points out in the Epistle to the Ephesians. He speaks to them as able to understand his knowledge in the mystery of Christ, and the brotherhood of mankind in the common Fatherhood of God.

Ver. 28. Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers. 'So be watchful,' Paul went on to say. 'My part is done. For the future the grave responsibility of guiding this precious flock will be yours, elders of the Church of Ephesus—yours the care of providing that it be kept from error; and first I press home to you to take heed to your own lives, to the example you set, to the influence you exert.' The Greek word rendered here 'overseers' (*ἐπισκόποι*) is usually rendered 'bishops,' as, for instance, the same word in the singular in 1 Pet. ii. 25, 'Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.' The Holy Ghost—as in Acts xiii. 2, when the same Holy Spirit directed the prophets and teachers of Antioch to choose Barnabas and Saul for the mission work in Gentile countries—had probably guided Paul in the first instance in his selection of these pastors. In this reference to the work of the Holy Ghost also the inward call is referred to, that secret impulse which first drew the man to the holy work and office of an ordained minister in the Church.

To feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. In this most important doctrinal statement a grave variation in the reading in the original Greek of the most ancient authorities exists. For 'the Church of God,' some MSS. of great weight read 'the Church of the Lord.' This would water down the immense importance of the doctrinal assertion here. But later research has now decidedly inclined the balance in favour of the reading of the received text, 'the Church of God.'

The words of Dr. Scrivener, the most distinguished living English critic, on this point are most weighty. 'The reading of the received text,' he says, 'though different from that of the majority of copies, is *pretty sure to be correct*. It is upheld by the Sinaitic and Vatican MSS., Codices A and B, by *all* the known MSS. and editions of the Vulgate (except the Complutensian). Patristic testimony also slightly inclines to the same reading, "the Church of God." Foremost among these come the words of Ignatius (A.D. 107), who speaks in his Epistle to the Ephesians, chap. i., of the "blood of God."

The same Ignatius (*Epistle to Romans*, 6) also uses the expression, 'the Passion of my God.' In Clement of Alexandria, too, we have the very phrase, 'Blood of God.' Tertullian (*Ad Uxorem*, ii. 3) also uses these same words.

We therefore unhesitatingly adopt the words of our English Authorised Version as the correct translation of the original Greek words, and possess in these words a distinct expression of the belief of the Apostolic Church in the absolute Divinity of the Son and of the nature of His work as Redeemer; in other words, Paul authoritatively taught here that, '*As for the Church of God, God purchased it with His own blood.*'

Ver. 29. For I know this, that after my departure shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. 'Primum venit Paulus; deinde venient lupi' (Bengel). Two distinct classes of teachers who should arise after his departure are alluded to by Paul—the 'grievous wolves' who would come to Ephesus from other cities, and the 'speakers of perverse things' who would arise from within.

It has been suggested with great probability that the apostle foresaw that his bitterest enemies would be the Judaizing teachers who came from a distance, and that they, who had injured him and his cause in past times, are hinted at here.

He seems to press home to them what he foresaw would surely come to pass, that after he had gone, other teachers of an entirely different character would come among them. The sad words of St. Paul in the last epistle of his life, some six years after these words were spoken, show how mournfully the prediction contained in these solemn warning words was verified: 'This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me' (2 Tim. i. 15).

Ver. 30. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. The Church of Ephesus singularly enough became notorious in after days as a famous seat of the great and widespread Gnostic heresy. Even in the New Testament writings, no fewer than six of the pioneers of these fatal teachers of error are mentioned as belonging to Ephesus. In the First Epistle to Timothy we hear of Hymenæus and Alexander (chap. i. 20). In the Second Epistle to the same chief presbyter of Ephesus, mention is made of Phygellus and Hermogenes (chap. i. 15), and of Philetus (chap. ii. 17). These Epistles were written in A.D. 65–66. In the Third Epistle of John, who lived at Ephesus, written about A.D. 90, ver. 9, we read of another of these false teachers, Diotrephes.

In the Apocalypse, written A.D. 80–90, in the Epistle addressed to the angel of the Church in this same city of Ephesus, it is said that there were among them those who held the doctrine

of the Nicolaitanes (chap. ii. 6), 'which I also hate.' Church history (Eusebius, *H. E.* iv. 14) recounts, too, how the Apostle John met with the heresiarch Cerinthus during his residence at Ephesus. 'Ephesus,' observes Creuzer (quoted by Gloag), 'was above all others the place where oriental views were in various ways combined with the mythology and philosophy of Greece; in truth, this city was a complete storehouse of magical arts and deceptions' (see Acts xix. 19 and 35).

Ver. 31. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears. We have the statement in Acts xix. 8–10 that Paul disputed in the Ephesian synagogue three months, and for two years taught publicly in the school of Tyrannus; added to this there is the undefined time which elapsed after the 'Diana' tumult and his first departure. This would amply justify him in representing his ministry as extending over three years. The approving words to the angel to the Church of Ephesus, written about a quarter of a century after these warnings of St. Paul, tell us that the earnest wishes and the affectionate pleadings of the apostle were not in vain:—'I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: and hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted' (Rev. ii. 2, 3).

Ver. 32. And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace. In conclusion, Paul commends these brethren of his—who are entrusted with the carrying on of his great work, who are charged with the solemn duty of keeping burning in Ephesus the torch of Divine truth—to the mighty and faithful protection of God. He places, so to speak, these elders of his dear Ephesian Church under the solemn guardianship of the Almighty wings. He commends them not only to God, but to the Word of His grace. Most commentators understand by the 'Word of His grace' not the personal Word, the Logos, but the doctrine of God, and suppose that these words are parenthetically introduced, thus: 'I commend you to God' (and the word of His grace, *i.e.* the doctrine contained in His word), 'to God who is able,' etc.; but such an interpretation seems in a high degree unsatisfactory and strained. It is surely better to adopt the obvious meaning, thus: 'I commend you to God and to the Word of His grace,' the Word (Logos) the Second Person of the blessed Trinity.

Though the expression 'Logos or Word' as used by St. John is not found in any other passage of the 'Acts' or in the Gospel of St. Luke, it would not on this ground be right to distort this passage from its obvious meaning. The expression was known, no doubt, to St. Luke, though perhaps not in common use among Christians until St. John adopted it in his Gospel.

Which is able to build you up. 'We cannot pass over the word "build" without noting the occurrence of the same thought and word in St. Paul's Epistle to the same Church of Ephesus' (ii. 20, 21, iv. 12, 16, 29). 'The figure was a natural one anywhere' (comp. 1 Cor. iii. 10), 'but it would gain additional vividness from the stately architecture of Ephesus' (Plumptre).

And to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified. The inheritance is glorious for two reasons; it consists in 'communion with God,' and also in a 'blessed communion with all God's saints,' who have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb. The same striking and beautiful thought almost in these very words occurs in the Ephesian Epistle, 'that ye may know what' (are) 'the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints' (Eph. i. 18; see, too, Eph. i. 14 and v. 5).

It is the thought of the vast crowd of the redeemed, that 'multitude whom no man can number' of all peoples and nations and tongues, that broadly extended communion of saints, which constitutes one great feature in the glory of the inheritance, and which increases unspeakably the blessedness of the world to come.

Ver. 33. **I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel.** In other words, 'I seek not yours, but you.' Even in those early days of the Faith, covetousness, the love of gold and wealth, and the things gold and wealth can purchase, was after all the greatest temptation in a minister's life. Then as now, now as then! How earnestly Paul strove against even the very shadow of appearance of evil in this matter, we have constant and ample testimony. Rather than even receive gifts which would supply him with the necessities of life, this scholar, teacher, and missionary would work for himself in the workshop of an Aquila at the rough haircloths used for tents. See, for instance, the statement in the next verse, and such references as 2 Thess. iii. 10-12; 1 Cor. iv. 11, 12; Acts xviii. 3. The same grave warning was given some years later to his loved disciple Timothy, himself subsequently the chief presbyter in this same Church of Ephesus, when, after having in strong, vigorous language told his friend of the temptations of the rich, and the lusts, foolish and hurtful, these fell into, 'for the love of money was the root of all evil,' he turns to Timothy with the noble, simple appeal: 'But thou, O man of God, flee these things.' Be thou above coveting these dangerous, soul-destroying riches. 'Apparel' is here added to gold and silver, because in all times rich and costly apparel has formed a conspicuous part of the wealth and possessions of an opulent oriental household. Eastern people were in the habit of trafficking in and also of keeping in store these costly garments; hence the allusion in Matt. vi. 19 to the power not only of rust, but of the moth (see, too, Jas. v. 2). The Ephesians, we read, were celebrated for their luxurious apparel (*Athenaus*, quoted by Gloag).

Ver. 34. **Yes, ye yourselves know, that these hands.** No doubt here holding up his toil-worn, work-scarred hands. See the reference to St. Paul's custom of working with his own hands in the note above on the preceding (33d) verse.

Ver. 35. **I have showed you all things, how, etc.** 'All things' here signifies 'in all ways,' by teaching and by life. Not only have I told you in words what is the duty of a Christ-loving man, but I tried to live the life before you which I told you of.

**That so labouring ye ought to support the weak.** So labouring as I have done, ye ought to help and succour—not here the 'weak in faith,' the anxious, the doubter, the sceptic, but the sick, the feeble, the poor, who are unable to help themselves. It is a beautiful and touching reminder

not only to these elders of Ephesus, but to all who say they love the Lord Jesus, to exercise self-denial in various ways, that they may possess some means wherewith to help those poorer, weaker, more helpless than themselves (Eph. iv. 28). It is evident from the quotation of the words of the Master which follow, that this is the meaning of 'the weak' here.

**And to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.** These beautiful words of the Master, Paul quoted as evidently well known, and as quite familiar to his listeners, yet they are not found in the four Gospels in any form. They are evidently a memory, a loved memory, of one of the Master's favourite sayings; and although they enforce with the solemn distinctness of a command of God the duty of liberality and kindness to the poor and helpless, they possess a far deeper meaning, for they assert as an eternal truth, the higher blessedness of giving than receiving. Perhaps the full truth of this Divine saying of the Holy One and Blessed, in all its length and breadth, and depth and height, will never be grasped by any but the redeemed, and not by them till they enter the city of the Lamb. Do they not foreshadow in some way the occupation of the blessed in heaven? Will they not all *then* be ministering spirits?

The whole question concerning the 'traditional sayings' of the Lord is discussed at some length in Excursus B., which follows this chapter.

#### *The Last Prayer and the Farewell—Paul leaves Miletus, 36-38.*

Ver. 36. **And when he had thus spoken, he kneeled down.** We are acquainted with the attitude which prevailed among Christians in very early times. They were in the habit of *kneeling* in prayer on ordinary occasions, but they considered *standing* in prayer the posture most fitting for praise and thanksgiving; so usually on the first day of the week—the Lord's day—they prayed 'standing.' This posture in prayer was also adopted during the seven weeks which intervened between Passover and Pentecost, roughly speaking, the 'forty days,' as they considered this a period of joy and thanksgiving.

**And prayed with them all.** Professor Plumtre writes 'that the historian, who has recorded what we may call this charge of St. Paul, shrinks with a natural reverence from reporting his prayer. Eph. iii. 14-21 will enable the thoughtful reader to represent to himself its substance, perhaps even its very thoughts and words.'

Ver. 37. **And fell on Paul's neck, and kissed him.** These demonstrative expressions of affection are in accordance with eastern customs (see Gen. xlv. 14 and xlv. 29). The word is a strong one, and might be rendered, 'kept tenderly kissing him.' The Greek word here used we find in the description of the traitor Judas kissing the Lord in Gethsemane, where it describes the affected earnestness of the fatal kiss.

Ver. 38. **That they should see his face no more.** In this both Paul and his companions in work—the elders of Ephesus—were no doubt wrong. St. Paul most probably did revisit these shores, and no doubt Ephesus and its church, after his liberation from the Roman imprisonment. See the note on ver. 25, where this is discussed at some length.

## EXCURSUS A.

## ON THE OBSERVANCE OF THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK BY THE EARLY CHRISTIANS.

Neander well remarks: 'Since the sufferings of Christ appeared as the central point of all religious experience and life, since His resurrection was considered as the foundation of all Christian joy and hope, it was natural that the communion of the Church should have specially distinguished the day with which the memory of that event had connected itself.' Let us with great brevity trace the 'story' of the sacred Christian day. On the *first day of the week* our Lord rose from the dead, and in the course of the day, we know, appeared on five different occasions to His followers—to Mary Magdalene, to the other women, to the two disciples on their road to Emmaus, to St. Peter separately, to the apostles collectively. After eight days, that is, according to the ordinary way of reckoning, on the *first day of the week*, He appeared to the eleven. We possess no account of His having appeared in the interval; not improbably this was done specially to render that day memorable to the apostles. In that year of the 'resurrection,' the *day of Pentecost* fell on the *first day of the week*, 'when,' as we read, 'they were all with one accord in one place.' Thus, on the day already known as the day of the Lord's resurrection, the disciples received from heaven their baptism of fire, and became in a new strange way indeed the Lord's anointed. The first day of the week thus doubly became the birthday of the religion of Jesus Christ. About a quarter of a century later occurred the scene related in this 20th chapter of the 'Acts.' It would seem that at this period the '*first day*' had become the ordinary and stated day of Christian assembling. It was evidently the usual day for the brethren of Troas to meet together to 'break bread' in commemoration of their Master, and to receive religious instruction. St. Paul's words, written only a few months before this scene at Troas, from Ephesus to the Corinthian Church, in the same undesigned way refers to the *first day of the week* being well known as the day for the practice of special religious duties: 'Upon the first day of the week, let every one of you lay by him in store as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come' (1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2).

Many years later, St. John in his 'Revelation,' i. 10, writes of himself as being 'in the Spirit on the Lord's day.' By this name he could not have intended to speak of the 'Sabbath,' for the word 'Sabbath' was then universally used by Jews and Christians for the seventh day. He could only have been thinking of the one solemn day of the week, hallowed by the glorious memories of the first Easter and Pentecost, and which the reverent followers of Jesus had called after their Master. This name, as we shall see from the writings of the next century, became the common and usual designation of the Christian holy day. Passing from the inspired books to the writings of men who lived in the generation succeeding that of the apostles and their immediate disciples, we read in the Epistle of Barnabas (not the friend of Paul, but a teacher of Alexandria, who wrote in the first half of the second century), 'We celebrated the eighth day, *i.e.* the first day of the week, with joy, on which Jesus rose from the dead.' Justin

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Marty who flourished in the same period about A.D. 140, tells us that 'on the day called Sunday was an assembly of all who lived either in cities or in rural districts, and the memoirs of the apostles and the writings of the apostles are read.' He describes further the various details of the acts of these religious assemblies, their prayers, the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, and the collection of alms, and then gives us the reasons which induced Christians to meet together on the Sunday. The first is a singular one: 'Because it is the first day of the seven on which God dispelled the darkness and the original state of things and formed the world;' the second was, 'Because Jesus Christ our Saviour rose from the dead upon it.' A few years later, in a fragment of a letter of Dionysius, Bishop of Corinth, to Soter, Bishop of Rome (A.D. 170), occur these words: 'To-day was the Lord's day and kept holy, and we read your letter, from the reading of which from time to time we shall be able to derive admonition, as we do from the former one written to us by the hand of Clement.' Melito, Bishop of Sardis, a contemporary of Bishop Dionysius of Corinth, among other works which have long since been lost, is stated by Eusebius to have written a treatise on 'the Lord's day.' A very little later, about A.D. 180, Irenæus, Bishop of Lyons in Gaul, alludes clearly and distinctly to the universal observance of the Lord's day. Clement of Alexandria, A.D. 196, speaks of the Lord's day as a well-known and customary festival. Tertullian of Carthage, about A.D. 200, speaks often of the Lord's day in such terms as, 'We consider it wrong to fast on the Lord's day,' 'Sunday we give to joy.' In one passage he distinctly refers to the cessation from business on the part of the Christians on the Lord's day. Origen, the great Alexandrian master, A.D. 230, says, 'It is one of the marks of the perfect Christian to keep the Lord's day.' Other passages, in which mention is casually made of the solemn observance of the first day of the week by the Christians, usually under the name of the 'Lord's day,' occur in the writings of Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, A.D. 250; Commodian, A.D. 270, and others (these are quoted at length in the learned and exhaustive history of 'the Lord's day,' by Archdeacon Hessey, *Bampton Lectures*, 'Sunday,' 1860. See Lecture ii., and the notes at the end of the volume).

We have here adduced testimony—dating from the days immediately succeeding the resurrection, A.D. 32 down to A.D. 270, shortly after which date Christianity became the recognised faith of the Roman world, and its practices of world-wide notoriety—that the first day of the week was chosen and adopted by the early Christians, acting upon the direction of the apostles, as the special day on which the solemn weekly assemblies were to meet, the Holy Communion celebrated, and public instruction in the religion of the Lord Jesus given. At first the old Hebrew Sabbath was kept by the Jewish Christians with the old legal strictness; but as the Christian faith spread among Gentile nations, silently the old Sabbath observances seem to have been with common consent dispensed with, and in Gentile lands the sacred associations which surrounded the seventh day were transferred to the first day, which among all Christians was generally termed, in memory of the great event which happened on it, 'the



Lord's day But while the sacred character of the seventh day was thus transferred to the first day of the week, the burdensome restrictions which made the keeping of the old Hebrew Sabbath so difficult and painful to the stranger proselyte were laid aside for ever.

The teaching and the practice of the Christian Church in all ages has strictly maintained, if not

the letter, most certainly the spirit of the Sinai charge of the Eternal, 'Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.'

The following little table will show how the above-cited evidence for the practice of the primitive Christian Church in the matter of the 'Lord's day' was drawn from all the principal centres of early Christianity :—

Writer.	Date.	City.	Country.
	A.D.		
St. Paul, . . . .	57	...	Greece, Asia Minor.
St. John, . . . .	90	Ephesus, . . . .	Asia Minor.
Barnabas, . . . .	140	Alexandria, . . .	Egypt.
Justin Martyr, . .	140	Rome and Ephesus,	Italy, Asia Minor.
Dionysius, . . . .	170	Corinth, . . . .	Greece.
Melito, . . . . .	170	Sardis, . . . . .	Asia Minor.
Irenæus, . . . . .	180	Lyons, . . . . .	Gaul.
Clement, . . . . .	190	Alexandria, . . .	Egypt.
Tertullian, . . . .	200	Carthage, . . . .	North Africa.
Origen, . . . . .	230	Alexandria, . . .	Egypt.
Cyprian, . . . . .	250	Carthage, . . . .	North Africa.

#### EXCURSUS B.

##### WORDS OF THE LORD JESUS NOT QUOTED IN THE FOUR GOSPELS.

The saying of the Lord Jesus, quoted by St. Paul in the 35th verse of this 20th chapter, as we remarked, does not occur in the Gospels. It is one of the few 'sayings' of the Holy One which is preserved outside the 'memoirs' of the four.

The origin of the Gospels will always remain uncertain. We shall never know what determined the evangelists to select the sayings and teachings they have embodied in their four writings. They were, we know, guided by the Holy Spirit in their selection and rejection. St. John, in the close of his Gospel, alludes to many unwritten words and acts of his Master (xxi. 25). It appears strange at first that so few of these have come down to us. The best explanation we can give, is to assume that the inspired four were directed by the 'Holy Spirit' to make an unerring choice of what was necessary for the teaching of the world; and when that choice had been made, the memory of the rest (partly, perhaps, from disuse) gradually faded away, and the next generation scarcely retained any record of word spoken or deed done by the Lord beyond those embodied in the narratives of the 'four.' The apostles' preaching in the first days was based on those acts and words of their Master which seemed to these inspired men to possess the fullest significance for the exhibition of His Divine life. The apostles (certainly the greater number of them) remained in Jerusalem long enough in close communion to shape a common narrative. The Gospels of St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke were the result, then, of this apostolic preaching. St. John wrote later, and gave rather his own memories of his Lord than the united experiences of the Twelve. This is the opinion of Professor Westcott in his most able *Introduction to the Study of the Gospels* (chap. iii.), and thoroughly commends itself to the minds of all thoughtful and devout students of the Holy Word. Now, outside the inspired memories of the Gospels, we possess the record of some twenty sayings of Jesus Christ which have floated down to

us. They come from many centres in the East and West,—from Rome, from centres like Alexandria, Ephesus, Smyrna, Cæsarea,—and are preserved by the most famous and trustworthy of the oldest fathers of the Church. We may, I think, look on them as fragments containing some true and original memories of our Lord's teaching, although, as has been well said in the case of not a few of them, 'whatever nucleus of truth there was at first, has been encrusted over with mystic or fantastic imagination.'

The following collection is taken from Professor Westcott. It may be looked upon as containing all the original traditional sayings of the Master, preserved in the most trustworthy authorities of the early Church (see Appendix C. of Dr. Westcott's *Introduction to the Gospels*):—

1. Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how He said, *It is more blessed to give than to receive* (Acts xx. 35; comp. Luke vi. 30).
2. On the same day, having seen one working on the Sabbath, He said to him, *O man, if indeed thou knowest what thou doest, thou art blessed; but if thou knowest not thou art cursed, and art a transgressor of the law* (in Cod. D after Luke vi. 4).
3. *But ye seek to increase from little, and from greater to be less* (Cod. D). It seems to be a genuine fragment.
4. The Son of God says, *Let us resist all iniquity, and hold it in hatred* (Barn. Ep. 4).
5. Thus He (Christ) saith, *They who wish to see Me, and to lay hold on My kingdom, must receive me by affliction and suffering* (Barn. Ep. 7).
6. *Show yourselves tried money-changers* (Orig. in Joann. xix.). This is the most commonly-quoted of all apocryphal sayings, and seems to be genuine.
7. *He that wonders shall reign; and he that reigns shall rest* (Ex. Ev. Hebr. ap. Clem. Al. Strom.). *Look with wonder at that which is before you* (Ap. Clem. Al. Strom. ii. 9, 45).
8. *I came to put an end to sacrifices, and unless ye cease from sacrificing (God's) anger will not cease from you* (Ev. Ebion. ap. Epiph. Har. xxx. 16).
9. Jesus said to His disciples, *Ask great things,*

and the small shall be added unto you ; and ask heavenly things, and the earthly shall be added unto you (Orig. *de Orat.* 2).

10. Our Lord Jesus Christ said, *In whatsoever I may find you, in this will I also judge you* (Clem. Al. *Justitias* 40). *Such as I may find thee, I will judge thee*, saith the Lord (Nilus. ap. Anast. *Sin. quest.* 3).

11. The Saviour Himself says, *He who is near Me is near the fire ; he who is far from Me is far from the kingdom* (Orig. Hom. in Jerem. iii. p. 778 ; Didymus in Ps. lxxxviii. 8).

12. The Lord says in the Gospel, *If ye kept not that which is small, who will give you that which is great ? For I say unto you, That he that is faithful in very little, is faithful also in much* (Clem. Rom. Ep. ii. 8).

13. The Lord says, *Keep the flesh pure and the soul unspotted, that we may receive eternal life*, —perhaps that ye may receive eternal life (Clem. Rom. Cop. ii. 8).

14. The Lord Himself, having been asked by some one, *When His kingdom will come ?* saith, *When the two shall be one, and that which is without as that which is within, and the male with the female, neither male nor female* (Clem. Rom. Ep. ii. 12).

15. Jesus says, *For those that are sick I was sick, and for those that hunger I suffered hunger, and for those that thirst I suffered thirst* (Orig. in Matt. tom. xiii. 2).

16. In the Hebrew Gospel we find the Lord saying to His disciples, *Never be joyful except when ye shall look on your brother in love* (Hieron. in Eph. v. 3).

17. When the Lord came to Peter and the apostles (after His resurrection), He said to them, *Take hold, handle me, and see that I am not an incorporeal spirit*. And straightway they touched

Him and believed, being convinced by His flesh and by His Spirit (Ignat. *ad Smyrn.* 3).

18. Christ said, *Good must needs come, but blessed is he through whom it comes* (Clem. Hom. xii. 29).

19. It was not through unwillingness to impart His blessings that the Lord announced in some Gospel or other: *My mystery is for Me, and for the sons of My house*. We remember our Lord and Master, how He said to us: *Keep My mysteries for Me, and for the sons of My house* (Clem. Alex. *Strom.* v. 10-64).

20. *I will select to myself these things: very, very excellent are those whom My Father, who is in heaven, has given to Me* (Eusebius, *Theophania*, iv. 13).

21. The Lord taught of those days (of His future kingdom on earth), and said: *The days will come in which vines shall spring up, each having ten thousand stocks, and on each stock ten thousand branches, and on each branch ten thousand shoots, and on each shoot ten thousand bunches, and on each bunch ten thousand grapes, and each grape when pressed shall give five-and-twenty measures of wine. And when any saint shall have seized one bunch, another shall cry, I am a better bunch ; take me ; through me bless the Lord*. Likewise also (He said), that a grain of wheat shall produce ten thousand ears of corn, and each grain ten pounds of fine pure flour ; and so all other fruits and seeds and each herb according to its proper nature ; and that all animals, using for food what is received from the earth, shall live in peace and concord with one another, subject to men with all subjection. And he (Papias) added, saying, Now these things are credible to them which believe. And when Judas the traitor believed not, and asked : How then shall such productions proceed from the Lord ? the Lord said, *They shall see who shall come to these times* (Papias, cf. Iren. v. 5, 33, 53).

## CHAPTER XXI.

*St. Paul's last recorded Journey to Jerusalem by way of Tyre and Cæsarea—His Meeting with St. James and the Elders of the Church—The Tumult in the Temple—St. Paul is arrested by the Romans.*

- 1 AND it came to pass, that after we were gotten from them, and had launched, we <sup>a</sup> came with a straight course unto Coos, and the *day* following unto Rhodes, and from thence unto Patara : And finding a ship sailing over unto <sup>b</sup> Phenicia, we went aboard, and set forth. Now when we had discovered <sup>c</sup> Cyprus, we left it on the left hand, and sailed into <sup>d</sup> Syria, and landed at <sup>e</sup> Tyre : for <sup>f</sup> there the ship was to unlade *her* burden. And finding <sup>g</sup> <sup>h</sup> disciples, we tarried there seven days : who said to Paul <sup>i</sup> through the Spirit, that *he* should not <sup>j</sup> go up to Jerusalem. And when we had accomplished *those* days, we departed and went *our way* ; and *they* all <sup>k</sup> brought us on our way, with wives and children, till *we were* out of the city : and we <sup>l</sup> kneeled

<sup>1</sup> better 'rendered,' 'and after sighting.'

<sup>2</sup> better, 'and having found out'

<sup>a</sup> Ch. xvi. 12.

<sup>b</sup> See ch. xi. 19.

<sup>c</sup> Ver. 16.

<sup>d</sup> See ch. iv. 36.

<sup>e</sup> Cp. ch. xxvii.

<sup>f</sup> 5.

<sup>g</sup> See ch. xviii.

<sup>h</sup> 18.

<sup>i</sup> Ver. 7. See

Mat. xv. 21.

<sup>j</sup> Ver. 2.

<sup>k</sup> Gk. as ch.

xx. 1, 7. So

ch. xx. 30.

<sup>l</sup> Ch. xx. 23 :

ver. 12.

<sup>1</sup> Vers. 12, 15.

See Lu. ii. 4.

<sup>2</sup> See ch. xv. 3.

<sup>3</sup> See ch. vii. 60.



- 6 down on the shore, and prayed. And when we had <sup>m</sup> taken our leave one of another, we took ship; and they returned  
 7 home *again*. And when we had finished *our* course from 'Tyre, we came to \* Ptolemais, and saluted ' the brethren, and  
 8 abode with them one day. And the next day we <sup>s</sup> that were of Paul's company <sup>s</sup> departed, and came unto ' Cæsarea: and we entered into the house of ' Philip ' the evangelist, which  
 9 was *one* ' of the seven; and abode with him. And the same  
 10 *man* had four daughters, virgins, ' which did prophesy. And as we tarried *there* many days, there came down from Judea a  
 11 certain \* prophet, named ' Agabus. And when he was come unto us, he took Paul's <sup>m</sup> girdle, and bound his *own* hands and feet, and said, Thus saith \* the Holy Ghost, ' So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and ' shall  
 12 deliver *him* into the hands of the Gentiles. And when we heard these *things*, both we, and they of that place, besought  
 13 him not to \* go up to Jerusalem. Then Paul answered, What mean <sup>a</sup> ye to weep and to break mine heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, <sup>a</sup> but also to die at Jerusalem <sup>b</sup> for the  
 14 name of the Lord Jesus. And when he would not be persuaded,  
 15 we ceased, saying, ' The will of the Lord be done. And after those days we took up our <sup>d</sup> carriages, and <sup>e</sup> \* went up to Jerusalem. There went with us also *certain* of the ' disciples of  
 16 ' Cæsarea, and brought ' *with them* one Mnason of ' Cyprus, an old <sup>h</sup> ' disciple, with whom we should lodge.  
 17 And when we were come to Jerusalem, <sup>k</sup> the brethren ' received us gladly. And the *day* following Paul went in with us  
 18 unto <sup>k</sup> James; and all ' the elders were present. And when he had saluted them, he <sup>m</sup> declared particularly <sup>n</sup> what *things* God  
 20 had wrought among the Gentiles by \* his ministry. And when they heard *it*, they ' glorified the Lord,<sup>10</sup> and said unto him, Thou seest, <sup>s</sup> brother, how many thousands of Jews<sup>11</sup> there are  
 21 which believe; and they are all ' zealous of the law: And they ' are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying<sup>12</sup> that they *ought* not to circumcise *their* children, neither to walk after the  
 22 ' customs. ' What is it therefore? the multitude must needs

<sup>8</sup> The older authorities omit the words, ' that were of Paul's company.'

<sup>9</sup> or ' Holy Spirit.' <sup>10</sup> literally, ' what are ye doing weeping,' etc.

<sup>11</sup> There is a slight variation here in the reading of the older authorities, according to which the rendering would be, ' we packed up our baggage.' See notes above.

<sup>12</sup> literally, ' bringing with them;' but see notes above.

<sup>13</sup> better perhaps, ' an early disciple.'

<sup>14</sup> Some would render here, ' he related one by one.'

<sup>15</sup> The older authorities, instead of ' the Lord,' read here, ' God.'

<sup>16</sup> The older authorities read here, ' among the Jews.'

<sup>17</sup> Some would render, ' telling them not to circumcise,' etc.

<sup>m</sup> Ch. xx. 1 (Gk.).

<sup>n</sup> So Judg. i. 32.

<sup>o</sup> Ver. 17. See Jo. xxi. 23.

<sup>p</sup> See ch. xiii. 13.

<sup>q</sup> Ver. 16. See ch. viii. 40.

<sup>r</sup> See ch. vi. 5.

<sup>s</sup> Eph. iv. 11.

<sup>t</sup> 1 Tim. iv. 5.

<sup>u</sup> Joel ii. 28.

<sup>v</sup> See ch. xii. 6.

<sup>w</sup> See ch. xi. 27.

<sup>x</sup> Ch. xi. 28.

<sup>y</sup> Cp. Jer. xiii. 1-21. See 1 Kings xxii. 11.

<sup>z</sup> See ch. xx. 23.

<sup>aa</sup> Cp. ver. 33.

<sup>ab</sup> Cp. Mat. xi. 19.

<sup>ac</sup> Ver. 15.

<sup>ad</sup> ch. xviii. 22.

<sup>ae</sup> See ch. xx. 24.

<sup>af</sup> Ch. ix. 16.

<sup>ag</sup> See Mat. vi. 10.

<sup>ah</sup> Cp. Ruth i. 18.

<sup>ai</sup> See Judg. xviii. 21.

<sup>aj</sup> See ch. xi. 26.

<sup>ak</sup> Ver. 8.

<sup>al</sup> Ver. 3.

<sup>am</sup> Ver. 7.

<sup>an</sup> So ch. xv. 4 (Gk.).

<sup>ao</sup> See ch. xii. 17.

<sup>ap</sup> See ch. xi. 30.

<sup>aq</sup> Ch. xv. 12.

<sup>ar</sup> So Rom. xv. 18, 19.

<sup>as</sup> See ch. i. 17.

<sup>at</sup> So ch. iv. 21.

<sup>au</sup> xi. 18. See Mat. xv. 31.

<sup>av</sup> Ch. ix. 17.

<sup>aw</sup> 2 Pet. iii. 15.

<sup>ax</sup> Gal. i. 14.

<sup>ay</sup> Cp. ch. xiii. 3.

<sup>az</sup> Rom. x. 2.

<sup>ba</sup> Ver. 24. See Lu. i. 4.

<sup>bb</sup> See ch. vi. 14.

<sup>bc</sup> See 1 Cor. xiv. 15.

- 23 come together: for they will hear that thou art come. Do therefore this that we say to thee: We have four men which
- 24 have <sup>a</sup> a vow on them; Them take, and <sup>b</sup> purify thyself with them, and be at charges with them, that they may <sup>c</sup> shave *their* heads: and all may know<sup>18</sup> that *those things*, whereof <sup>d</sup> they were informed concerning thee, are nothing; but *that* thou thyself
- 25 also walkest orderly, and keepest the law. As touching the Gentiles which believe, <sup>e</sup> we have written and concluded<sup>16</sup> that they observe no such *thing*,<sup>18</sup> save only that they keep themselves from things offered to idols, and from blood, and from
- 26 strangled,<sup>18</sup> and from fornication. Then Paul took the men, and the next day <sup>f</sup> purifying himself with them, <sup>g</sup> entered into the temple, to signify the accomplishment of the days of purification, until that <sup>h</sup> an offering should be offered for every one
- 27 of them. And when <sup>i</sup> the seven days were almost ended, <sup>j</sup> the Jews which were of<sup>17</sup> <sup>k</sup> Asia, <sup>l</sup> when they saw him in the temple,
- 28 <sup>m</sup> stirred up all the people, and <sup>n</sup> laid hands on him, Crying out, Men of Israel, help: This is the man that teacheth all *men* everywhere against the people, and <sup>o</sup> the law, and this place: and further brought Greeks also into the temple, and <sup>p</sup> hath
- 29 polluted this holy place. (For they had seen before with him in the city <sup>q</sup> Trophimus an <sup>r</sup> Ephesian, whom they supposed
- 30 that Paul had brought into the temple.) And all the city was moved, and the people ran together: and <sup>s</sup> they took Paul, and <sup>t</sup> drew him out of the temple: and forthwith the doors were
- 31 shut. And as *they* went about to kill him,<sup>18</sup> tidings came unto <sup>u</sup> the chief captain of the <sup>v</sup> band, that all Jerusalem <sup>w</sup> was in an uproar; <sup>x</sup> Who immediately took soldiers and centurions, and ran down unto<sup>19</sup> them: and when they saw <sup>y</sup> the chief captain
- 33 and the soldiers, they left<sup>20</sup> beating of Paul. Then <sup>z</sup> the chief captain came near, and took him, and commanded *him* <sup>aa</sup> to be bound with <sup>ab</sup> two chains; and demanded<sup>21</sup> who he was, and
- 34 what he had done. And <sup>ac</sup> some cried one *thing*, some another, among the multitude: and when he could not know the certainty for the tumult, he commanded him to be carried<sup>22</sup> into <sup>ad</sup> the castle. And when he came upon <sup>ae</sup> the stairs, so it was, that he
- 36 was borne of the soldiers for the violence of the people. For the multitude of the people followed *after*, crying, <sup>af</sup> Away with him.
- 37 And as Paul was to be led into <sup>ag</sup> the castle, he said unto the

<sup>18</sup> *The older authorities, instead of 'may know,' read 'shall know.'*

<sup>14</sup> *better, 'and decided.'*

<sup>16</sup> *Some of the older authorities omit the words, 'that they observe no such thing, save only.'*

<sup>17</sup> *better, 'the Jews (who came) from Asia.'*

<sup>18</sup> *better, 'and while they were seeking to kill him.'*

<sup>19</sup> *literally, 'upon them.'*

<sup>21</sup> *better, 'asked who he was.'*

<sup>20</sup> *better, 'ceased beating.'*

<sup>22</sup> *more accurately, 'to be led.'*

<sup>a</sup> Ver. 26;  
ch. xxiv. 18.  
<sup>b</sup> See Jo. xi. 55.  
<sup>c</sup> Num. vi. 2.  
18; ch. xviii.  
18.

<sup>e</sup> Ch. xv. 20,  
29.

<sup>x</sup> Num. vi. 13.

<sup>y</sup> Num. vi.  
10-12.  
<sup>z</sup> Num. vi. 9.  
<sup>aa</sup> Ch. xxiv. 18.  
<sup>ab</sup> See ch. ii. 9.  
<sup>ac</sup> Ch. xxiv. 18,  
xxvi. 21.  
<sup>ad</sup> See ch. xix.

<sup>ae</sup> See Lu. xxi.  
12.  
<sup>af</sup> Ch. xxv. 8.  
So ch. vi. 13.  
See Jo. xi.  
48.  
<sup>ag</sup> So ch. xxiv. 6.  
<sup>ah</sup> See ch. xx. 4.  
<sup>ai</sup> See ch. xviii.  
19.

<sup>aj</sup> So ch. xxvi.  
21. Cp.  
2 Kings xi.  
15.  
<sup>ak</sup> See ch. xvi.  
19.  
<sup>al</sup> Jo. xviii. 23  
(Gk.). See  
Mk. vi. 21.  
<sup>am</sup> See Jo. xviii.  
3.

<sup>an</sup> Cp. ch. xxiii.  
27, xxiv. 7.

<sup>ao</sup> Ch. xx. 23;  
ver. 11.  
<sup>ap</sup> Ch. xii. 6.  
Cp. ch. xxii.  
29, 30, xxvi.  
29, xxviii. 20.  
<sup>aq</sup> Ch. xix. 32.  
<sup>ar</sup> Ver. 37;  
ch. xxii. 24,  
xxiii. 20, 16,  
32.  
<sup>as</sup> Ver. 40. Cp.  
ch. xxii. 30,  
xxiii. 20, 15.  
<sup>at</sup> Ch. xxii. 22.  
Cp. Lu. xxiii.  
18; Jo. xix.  
15.

"chief captain, May I speak unto thee? Who said, Canst thou  
 38 speak Greek?"<sup>23</sup> "Art not thou *that* Egyptian, which before these  
 days "madest an uproar, and ledest out into "the wilderness  
 39 four thousand men that were murderers?"<sup>24</sup> But Paul said, I  
 am a man *which am* a Jew of "Tarsus, *a city* in Cilicia, a citizen  
 of no mean city: and, I beseech thee, suffer me to speak unto  
 40 the people. And when he had given *him* licence, Paul stood  
 on "the stairs, and "beckoned with the hand unto the people.  
 And when there was made a great silence, he spake unto *them*  
 in "the Hebrew tongue, saying,

<sup>23</sup> *more literally*, 'Art thou acquainted with Greek?'

<sup>24</sup> *better rendered*, 'of the assassins.'

v Cp. ch. v. 36,  
 37.  
 w See ch. xvii.  
 6.  
 x Mat. xxiv.  
 26 (Gk.).  
 y Ch. xxii. 3.  
 z See ch. ix. 11.  
 a See ch. xii.  
 17.  
 b Ch. xxii. 2,  
 xxvi. 14.  
 So Lu. xxiii.  
 38; Jo. v. 2,  
 xix. 13, 17,  
 20; Rev. ix.  
 11, xvi. 16.  
 Cp. ch. i. 19

*St. Paul's Journey from Miletus to Tyre, 1-6.*

Ver. 1. And it came to pass, that after we were gotten from them. The Greek word here, as Chrysostom remarks, is a very forcible expres-

sion, and signifies, 'when we had torn ourselves away from them.' The parting between St. Paul and his Ephesian friends and fellow-workers must have been exceedingly painful.

We came with a straight course unto Coos.



Coos.

This was a small island about forty miles south of Miletus, opposite the coast where lay the cities of Cnidus and Halicarnassus. It was famous for its wines and fabrics. It possessed, in the days of Paul, a celebrated temple of Æsculapius, and was a renowned school of medicine. Josephus tells us that many Jews resided here. It was the birth-place of Hippocrates the physician, and Apelles the painter.

And the day following unto Rhodes. Rhodes lay fifty miles to the south of Coos. It was famed for being the most beautiful spot in this, perhaps the fairest portion of the world. There was a proverb that 'the sun shone every day in Rhodes.' From its unrivalled situation, lying as it does on the verge of two of the basins of the Mediterranean Sea, it has always been an emporium for the eastern and western trades. It was the point from which the Greek geographers reckoned their parallels of latitude and meridians of longitude. In the Greek period, it was illustrious especially for its great temple of the Sun, and for the Colossus; this latter, in the days of Paul, was in

ruins, having been overthrown by an earthquake. Its navy had done great and effectual service in the suppression of piracy in those seas.

In the days of Roman power, Rhodes still enjoyed a nominal freedom. It formally became a province of the Empire in the days of the Emperor Vespasian. In mediæval story, Rhodes obtained a distinguished place as the home of the Knights Hospitallers of St. John, and then it was the last Christian city to make a stand against the Saracens. It now belongs to the Ottoman Turks, retains its ancient name, but little else of its former magnificence and power.

And from thence unto Patara. Patara, on the coast of Lydia, was the harbour of Xanthus, and, from its ruins, was a place of some importance and splendour. Here was a famous oracle of Apollo. This port is now an inland marsh.

Ver. 2. And finding a ship sailing over unto Phœnicia. Circumstances here favoured Paul. Patara was evidently the harbour whither his ship was bound from Alexandria Troas; but there was another vessel on the point of sailing for Phœnicia: thus not a day was lost.

**Ver. 3. Now when we had discovered Cyprus.** The Greek word here rendered 'when we had discovered,' is a nautical expression such as an eye-witness, familiar with the language of sea-faring men, would have used; literally, having had (Cyprus) brought up to sight, made visible to us above the horizon. There are many such-like phrases in the 'Acts' which taste, so to speak, of the salt sea. It seems more than probable that Luke the physician, the compiler of these apostolic memoirs, had in some portion of his life been connected with some of the great trading ships of the Levant; very likely he had been employed on board in a professional capacity. The ship of Paul, we read, passed 'Cyprus,' the island he knew so well, the home probably still of his old friend Barnabas, on the left, as they sailed by it to the southward.

**And sailed into Syria.** The geographical name Syria is here employed in the Roman sense, according to which Phœnicia and Palestine were considered parts of the province of Syria. The distance between Patara and Tyre was 340 geographical miles.

**And landed at Tyre.** In St. Paul's days the glory of Tyre, as described in the prophecies of Isaiah and Ezekiel, had long since faded. Its merchants were no more princes. The modern cities of Antioch and Cæsarea had proved successful rivals to the old capital of Phœnicia. In honour of its ancient grandeur, the Roman Empire gave it the privilege of a 'free city.' It retained a considerable position among cities, however, until the close of the thirteenth century, when it was taken and destroyed by the Saracens. It has never risen since that awful ruin above the condition of a wretched village. It now, indeed, fulfils the old prophecy, and is literally, with its shapeless ruins by the sea, only 'a place to spread nets upon' (Ezek. xxvi. 14). Writing of Tyre, Dr. Hackett says: 'Its most important ruins lie at present beneath the sea; it was with melancholy interest that I looked down upon them through the calm waters, in the long twilight which closed the 10th of May 1852.'

**For there the ship was to unlade her burden.** Literally, 'for thither' (*ἔκεῖθεν γὰρ*). For having come *thither*, the ship was unloading, etc.



Rhodes.

**Ver. 4. And finding disciples.** Literally, 'and having found out the disciples.' There were disciples who lived at Tyre, these were searched out by Paul and his companions. There was a little Christian church in this city. See chap. xi. 19, where we read how those who were scattered abroad upon the persecution that arose about Stephen, travelled as far as Phœnice (Phœnicia), of which Tyre was the capital. Professor Plumptre suggests that this church had been planted probably by the labours of Philip as the Evangelist of Cæsarea. St. Paul himself had most likely visited Tyre when he 'passed through Phœnicia' on his journey to the Council of Jerusalem (Acts xv. 3).

**We tarried there seven days.** These 'seven days' may have been the time exactly occupied in the lading and unlading of the ship in which Paul was one of the passengers. But this peculiar period of time mentioned at *Troas* (xx. 6), and again at *Puteoli* (xxviii. 14), seems to tell us that St. Paul arranged to stay at each of these points where there was a Christian church—*Troas*,

*Puteoli*, and *Tyre*—for the purpose of attending one solemn meeting of the brethren on the Lord's day, and partaking once at least with them all of the Lord's Supper.

**Who said to Paul through the Spirit, that he should not go up to Jerusalem.** Chrysostom remarks here that they who at Tyre thus urged Paul, knew by the inspiration of the Spirit that certain afflictions awaited their beloved teacher at Jerusalem, but that their *exhortations* to him not to go up to the city were certainly not inspired by the Spirit (see vers. 23, 24 of the preceding chapter (xx.)), where the apostle refers to similar warnings of the Holy Ghost having come to him in every city). This, in fact, was only a repetition of what had happened before on several occasions. The Spirit had revealed to certain of the Church that grave dangers awaited St. Paul on his arrival at Jerusalem. These revelations were probably made to show the elders and teachers of the Church, through the example of Paul, what was the duty of a true elder and teacher in the face of the sorest peril. Paul listened to the warning



words, we know, but convinced that the work which his Master wished him to do called him to Jerusalem, set his face steadily towards the city, regardless of all danger and suffering. His example has not been lost on the Christian Church.

Ver. 5. **And when we had accomplished those days.** That is, simply when the seven days at Tyre had come to an end.

**We departed and went our way.** Literally, 'and were going on our way.' 'The imperfect tense of the Greek verb bringing before us something like a procession wending its way from the city to the shore' (Plumptre).

**And they all brought us on our way, with wives and children.** Baumgarten observes that this is the first time, in the notice of a Christian Church, that children are mentioned—that we have here the first recorded instance of Christianity pervading a whole family.

**Till we were out of the city: and we kneeled down on the shore, and prayed.** It is uncertain whether or no there was a *proseucha* or chapel, a temporary place of prayer, here on the shore for

the Christian brotherhood of Tyre, or whether it was simply that, as the Christians of Tyre were bidding farewell to Paul and his companions, they knelt down and prayed together. It is, however, certain that the Jews loved to pray on the sea-shore, and therefore it seems most probable that there was a 'proseucha' on this spot. The following extract of Biscoe contains several trustworthy allusions from ancient writers on this point: 'The sea-shore was esteemed by the Jews a place most pure, and therefore proper to offer up their prayers and thanksgiving to Almighty God. Philo tells us that the Jews of Alexandria, when Flaccus, the governor of Egypt, who had been their great enemy, was arrested by order of the Emperor Caius, not being able to assemble at their synagogues, which had been taken from them, crowded out at the gates of the city early in the morning, went to the neighbouring shores, and standing in a most pure place, with one accord lifted up their voices in praising God. Tertullian says that the Jews in his time, when they kept their great fast, left their synagogues, and on every shore sent forth their prayers to heaven (*de Jejuniis*).



Patara.

c. 16); and in another place, among the ceremonies used by the Jews, mentions *orationes littorales*, the prayers they made upon the shores (*Adv. Nat.* i. 13). And long before Tertullian's time there was a decree made at Halicarnassus in favour of the Jews, which, among other privileges, allows them to say their prayers near the shore, according to the custom of their country (Josephus, *Ant.* xiv. 10, 23). It is hence abundantly evident, that it was common with the Jews to choose the shore as a place highly fitting to offer up their prayers.'

*St. Paul completes his Journey to Jerusalem from Tyre by way of Ptolemais and Casarea to the Holy City, 7-17.*

Ver. 7. **And when we had finished our course from Tyre, we came to Ptolemais.** More literally, 'And we finishing our voyage, arrived at Ptolemais from Tyre.' The arrival of the apostle and his companions at Ptolemais completed the sea portion of their journey; the rest of the journey from Ptolemais to Jerusalem by Casarea was made by land. Ptolemais is one of the

oldest cities in the world; we read of it in Judg. i. 31, under the name of 'Accho,' as one of the old cities of the Canaanites which the children of Israel failed to obtain possession of. It was situate in the portion of Asher, and seems to have been ever considered as a Phœnician city. In a maritime point of view, it was a fortress of great importance, and has been looked on as the key of Galilee from the Mediterranean.

But with Israel the sea and the seaboard was ever a question of minor importance, hence possibly their neglect of such stations as Accho. On the partition of the Macedonian Empire, Accho fell to the lot of the Ptolemies. It was rebuilt and renamed Ptolemais by Ptolemy Soter. But its old name still survived, and eventually superseded the Egyptian title. It was famous in the Crusades under the name of St. Jean d'Acre. It is still called Acre, and has a population of some 15,000.

Ver. 8. **And came to Casarea.** The little company now travelled by land. Their route led them round Carmel along the coast for some thirty

to forty miles to Cæsarea. This was the third visit St. Paul had paid to this city: (1) On his journey from Jerusalem to Tarsus (chap. ix. 30); (2) on his return to Antioch from his Second Missionary Journey (xviii. 22); (3) in his last mission to Jerusalem now about to be described. For an account of Cæsarea see note on chap. viii. 40.

And we entered into the house of Philip the evangelist, which was one of the seven. We have already met with this Philip. In the early years of the Church's story, seven men were chosen by the believers in Jerusalem as assistants to the 'Twelve'; of these seven two seem to have come rapidly into great prominence, Stephen and Philip. The first of these, Stephen, after acquiring a fame unequalled in the first years of the faith, endured a martyr's death, and thus followed his Master. The second, Philip, like Stephen, became a great preacher. We read of him in Samaria (chap. viii. 5), and again on the way to Gaza (chap. xiii. 26), then as preaching in many nameless cities ('in all the cities,' chap. viii. 40), and finally apparently settling in Cæsarea. This was about A.D. 35-36, nearly a quarter of a century before the visit of St. Paul to the home of Philip on his way to the Holy City.

As regards the first title of Philip, 'a deacon,' the inferior title and also the original duties of the office had, in the case of the seven chosen assistants of the 'Twelve,' been quickly forgotten, owing doubtless to the important work which rapidly fell to the lot of these favoured men; with Philip the lesser duties had become merged in the higher ones which belonged to the office of evangelist.

The 'evangelists' of the early church are thus described by Eusebius (*H. E.*, iii. 37): 'After laying the foundation of the faith in foreign parts, as the peculiar object of their mission, and after appointing others as shepherds to the flock, and committing to them the care of those that had been recently introduced, they went again to other regions and nations with the grace and co-operation of God.' They were thus the missionaries of the first days, to use the words of Dr. Westcott (*Introduction to the Gospels*, chap. iii.): 'The evangelist was not the compiler of a history, but the missionary who carried the good tidings to fresh countries; the bearer and not the author of the message. Till the end of the first century, and probably till the time of Justin Martyr (about A.D. 140), "the Gospel," "Evangel," uniformly signifies the substance and not the records of the life of Christ.' We can thus trace how, when the story of the life of Christ—at first only told orally by the evangelist or missionary—was written down in the form of narrative, the inspired writers became known as the evangelists: after the four written records became widely known, it is probable that the title 'Evangelist' was appropriated only to them.

Professor Plumptre has an interesting note here on the meeting which must have taken place between Philip and Luke the companion of Paul: 'As far as we know, Philip and Luke had not met before, and we can imagine the satisfaction with which the latter (Luke), himself probably an evangelist in both senses of the word (2 Cor. viii. 18), and already contemplating his work as an historian, would welcome the acquaintance of the former (Philip); how he would ask many questions as to the early history of the Church, and learn

from him all or nearly all that we find in the first eleven chapters of this book.'

Ver. 9. And the same man had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy. This is an example of the fulfilment of the prophecy of Joel quoted by St. Peter in the early days of the faith (Acts ii. 17): 'And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy . . . and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my Spirit' (Joel ii. 28, 29).

From the several traditions respecting these four daughters, it seems that subsequently two of them were married. It is improbable that any 'order of virgins' existed at this early period. There seems to have been an organization (see 1 Tim. v. 9, etc.) at Ephesus of 'widows' of an advanced age, who spent their days in charitable work in connection with the Church. But we find no trace of any order of virgins in the early Christian Church. The Ministre alluded to by Pliny in his letter to the Emperor Trajan were not improbably deaconesses, but these need not have been, probably were not, virgins.

It is very likely that these 'four' foretold the apostle's coming captivity, and showed him the dangers he would meet with in Jerusalem.

Ver. 10. And as we tarried there many days. 'Many'; the Greek word thus rendered is in the comparative degree, and apparently signifies that Paul and his companions tarried in Cæsarea 'more days' than at first they had intended. He was now only two days' easy journey from Jerusalem, which he intended to reach by Pentecost.

The following table, compiled by Dr. Gloag, derived from the diary of the writer of the 'Acts,' will show how St. Paul had been enabled to accomplish his purpose of reaching Jerusalem before the Pentecostal feast (Acts xx. 16):—

Paul leaves Philippi after the days of Unleavened Bread (Acts xx. 6), that is, after Passover, . . .	6 days.
And came to Troas . . .	5 "
Where he abode . . .	7 "
Voyage from Troas to Miletus (xx. 13-15), . . .	4 "
At Miletus, . . .	2 "
Miletus to Patara (xxi. 1), . . .	4 "
Patara to Tyre, (about), . . .	4 "
He remained in Tyre . . .	7 "
Tyre to Ptolemais, . . .	1 day.
Ptolemais to Cæsarea, . . .	2 days.
He remained in Cæsarea . . .	5 or 6 "
Cæsarea to Jerusalem, . . .	2 "

On the fiftieth day after Passover, the feast of Pentecost occurred.

There came down from Judæa a certain prophet, named Agabus. This is the same Agabus whom we read of in chap. xi. 28; we are sure of his identity with the foreteller of the famine in the days of Claudius Cæsar—the name, the office, and the residence being the same in both instances. Fifteen or sixteen years had elapsed since Agabus of Jerusalem had prophesied before the Church of Antioch; he had doubtless now come down from the Holy City to meet Paul at Cæsarea.

Ver. 11. And when he was come unto us, he took Paul's girdle and bound his own hands and feet, and said. The loose flowing robes worn in eastern countries are bound about the waist with a sash or girdle. Taking this from the apostle, the Christian prophet, in the dramatic way with which the old seers of Israel were wont to deliver their prophecies, revealed to Paul the peculiar form of danger which surely awaited him

in the ancient capital of the people. Hitherto the prophetic voices had simply spoken of perils awaiting his arrival; Agabus now signifies the exact nature of the danger. He would be delivered by his own countrymen under some grave, probably capital charge into the hands of the Roman government. We have many instances in the Old Testament of similar symbolical prophecies; for instance, the horns of iron of Zedekiah when he prophesied before the kings of Judah and Israel (1 Kings xxii. 11); the walking naked and barefoot of Isaiah (Isa. xx. 2, 3); the marred linen girdle of Jeremiah (Jer. xiii. 4-9); the tile with the city of Jerusalem portrayed upon it (Ezek. iv. 1, 2); the iron pan of Ezekiel (Ezek. iv. 3), etc.

There were even darker plots in store threatening the life of the brave apostle, plots known no doubt to the inspired prophet (see Acts xxiii. 12). He would warn the well-known Christian leader, and if possible prevent his coming up to the Pentecostal feast.

**Thus saith the Holy Ghost.** A solemn formula, corresponding to the well-known Old Testament *כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה*, *Thus saith the Lord.*

Ver. 12. **And when we heard these things, both we, and they of that place, besought him not to go up to Jerusalem.** The prediction of Agabus, set forth in so striking and impressive a manner, and possibly, too, because it detailed the danger in a way much more precise than appears from the text of the narrative, moved even the fearless companions of Paul, men like Luke; and they, and Philip and his daughters, and others, joined their entreaties to the great leader not to risk a life so precious to the Master's cause, but to give up the journey.

Commentators strikingly call attention here to the parallel between Paul and Paul's Master, who had to listen to His disciple Peter endeavouring to persuade Him to turn aside from the way of suffering on which He had entered.

Ver. 13. **Then Paul answered, What mean ye to weep and to break my heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.** But Paul, in spite of these reiterated prophecies, notwithstanding the loving and affectionate entreaties of his friends, saw clearly the Divine will and his own plain duty through all this cloud of hindrances, and held on to his first purpose without flinching. The work his Master had appointed for him to do lay at Jerusalem. There, at the great Pentecostal feast, he would meet with many thousand Jews from all parts of the world, all more or less prejudiced against the famous apostle of the Gentiles who was said to be everywhere teaching the children of the chosen people to forsake the 'Law.' He would meet these face to face, and, supported by the countenance of James and the elders of the revered Jerusalem Church, disprove these painful fatal rumours. He would show the multitudes gathered together at Pentecost, how nobly his churches—his converts—had come forward with money and help for the distressed Palestine Jews, and thus he hoped for ever to set himself right with his own countrymen. He was an old man, wearied with ceaseless toils and worn with sickness and anxiety. The chance of meeting so great a concourse of Jews in the Holy City might never occur again;

so for his work's sake, for the sake of the many flourishing churches he had founded, he would do his best to disprove the false rumours so widely disseminated concerning his teaching. This was, we believe, in Paul's mind, and determined him at all risks to go up to the Holy City and keep the feast; and in spite of what happened there, there is no doubt but that this the real purpose of the visit was accomplished, and that with James the Lord's brother, the head of the Jerusalem Church, a vast proportion of the crowds from foreign lands who kept that Pentecost feast, from that time, as the result showed, loyally accepted the Gentile apostle and his noble work. Far down the stream of Christian centuries, another famous Christian leader, an ardent and devoted follower of Paul, when similarly warned of coming danger, resolutely replied to his friends in the spirit of Paul. It was when Luther was on his way to the city of Worms, that he too met with friends who warned him; and when he was near the city, his beloved friend Spalatin sent him a message entreating him not to enter and expose himself to such dangers. His answer was a memorable one: 'Although there were as many devils in Worms as there are tiles upon the house-tops, I will still go thither.'

Ver. 14. **We ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done.** It seems very probable that this expression of resignation to the Divine will, to which the brethren so reverently bowed, was a quotation from the Lord's Prayer, and such a use of one of its petitions suggests to us that the Christians of the Apostolic Age were in the habit of frequently using this model of prayer designed for them by their Master. On these words St. Bernard very beautifully writes: 'We say daily in the Lord's Prayer, "Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven." Oh, how pure and serene is our life when *that* will alone directs us, and when not a trace of our own will remains behind! With such a frame of mind, we become like unto God.'

Ver. 15. **And after those days we took up our carriages, and went up to Jerusalem.** There is a variety here in the Greek text. The literal translation of the word found in the Received Text (*ἀρσηνὰ ἡμεῶν*) would be, 'having stowed away our baggage,' that is, having stored our heavy packages away in Caesarea to await our return. The reading, however, of the older and more trustworthy authorities is *ἐπιφορὰς ἡμεῶν*, which is best rendered by 'having packed up our baggage,' that is, having placed it upon pack-horses or other beasts of burden with a view of carrying it with us up to Jerusalem. The alms which had been gathered with so much care and pains from many churches probably constituted a portion of this luggage. This precious and important charge, perhaps, was what St. Luke was especially alluding to here. The apparently strange English expression, 'we took up our carriages,' was in common use for 'the things carried' at the time when the Authorised Version was brought out. A similar use of the word 'carriages' we find in the description in the prophet's vision of the march of the invader (Sennacherib) toward Jerusalem (Isa. x. 23): 'He is come to Aiath, he is passed to Migron; at Michmash he hath laid up his carriages.' See, too, for a similar use of 'carriages,' Judg. xviii. 21; 1 Sam. xvii. 22; Isa. xlvii. 1.

Ver. 16. **There went with us also certain of the disciples of Caesarea, and brought with them**

one Mnason of Cyprus, an old disciple, with whom we should lodge. This rendering of the Greek words is a possible one. A simpler way, however, of translating the original, and one, too, that affords a better sense, is: 'There went with us also certain of the disciples of Cæsarea, conducting us to Mnason of Cyprus, an early disciple, with whom we should lodge.' The chief object apparently of the Cæsarean brethren in accompanying Paul to Jerusalem, was to introduce them to this Mnason, who was prepared to receive them as his guests. Mnason was no doubt an important person in the Jerusalem Church; he is styled 'an old or an early disciple,' and was possibly converted during the life of our Lord Himself. Mnason is a Greek name, he was therefore most probably an Hellenist or Greek-speaking Jew. Professor Plumptre thinks 'we may fairly infer that he was one of those who had been "from the beginning" among the eye-witnesses and ministers of the Word, to whom St. Luke refers as his informants (Luke i. 2). If so, it is interesting as showing that our Lord's disciples were not limited to the natives of Galilee and Judæa.'

Ver. 17. **And when we were come to Jerusalem.** St. Paul now arrives at Jerusalem for the fifth time since he left it on that never-to-be-forgotten journey to Damascus to persecute the believers in Jesus. This is the last recorded visit that he made to the Holy City. The probable date of this Pentecost, in which the events about to be recorded took place, was A.D. 58.

**The brethren received us gladly.** This must have been an informal reception either at the city gates or in the house of Mnason, for we read how James and the elders received the traveller and his companions on the day following.

*The Reception of Paul by James and the Jerusalem Elders—They tell Paul how he should act towards the Jewish Christians present at the Feast—The Gentile Apostle acts on their Advice, 18-25.*

Ver. 18. **And the day following Paul went in with us unto James.** This James was the so-called brother of the Lord, not one of the Twelve, but who, converted to the faith probably owing to a special appearance of the Lord after His resurrection, took his place at once among the more prominent members of the Jerusalem Church, of which community after some little time he became the 'bishop' or presiding elder. See the note, chap. xv. 13, where the position and character of this eminent and devoted servant of the Lord are discussed at some length. There are in the New Testament story three men bearing the name of James—the first, James the son of Zebedee, the brother of John, one of the twelve apostles: he suffered martyrdom at a comparatively early period in the history of the Church, at the hands of Herod (see Acts xii. 2): the second, James the Less, the son of Alphæus, also one of the Twelve; the third, James the so-called brother of the Lord (most probably with the other 'brethren of the Lord,' a son of Joseph by a former wife), the bishop or president of the Church of Jerusalem. He is generally known in history as 'the Just.' This is the James who received Paul when he came up to the Holy City to keep this feast of Pentecost, A.D. 58. Some ten or eleven years later, he suffered as a believer in Jesus of Nazareth, the year before the fatal siege of Jeru-

salem. By direction of the high priest Annas, a Sadducee, James, the head of the Christian Church in the city, was hurled from a pinnacle of the temple, and finally despatched by stoning (Hegesippus in Eus. *H. E.* ii. 23).

**And all the elders were present.** The mention of James and 'all the elders,' and the omission of any allusion to the apostles, is a clear proof that none of these were at this time resident in the Holy City. It must be borne in mind that more than a quarter of a century had passed since the memorable first Pentecost kept by the believers in Jesus of Nazareth; some had doubtless rejoined their Lord, others were working for Him in distant lands.

Ver. 19. **And when he had saluted them, he declared particularly what things God had wrought among the Gentiles by his ministry.** Both from the private (ver. 17) and public reception of Paul and his companions by the presiding elders and bishop of the Jerusalem Church, it is quite clear that the governing body among the resident Jerusalem Christians sympathized with Paul's work, and thoroughly endorsed his teaching and practice. The bitter opposition proceeded from a small though influential faction, which was represented to some extent in all those many populous centres where Jews congregated. Before this venerable assembly of the elders of the mother church of Christianity, presided over by one who had been with the Lord from the days of the sacred childhood, Paul rehearsed the story of the past three years, including what is generally called the Third Missionary Journey—all, in fact, that had taken place of importance since his last visit to the city, briefly recorded in chap. xviii. 22, dwelling on the vast numbers of Gentiles who had joined the Church of God in such centres as Ephesus, Corinth, Thessalonica, Philippi, Colossæ. On this occasion he, no doubt, presented the costly presents and alms contributed as a token of love and sympathy by these foreign Gentile congregations to their poor Jewish brethren in Palestine.

Ver. 20. **And when they heard it, they glorified the Lord, and said unto him.** Thus the Jerusalem elders and James, when they heard the story of the successful missionary apostle, reverently gave thanks to Almighty God for the great work done by the hand of His servant Paul. In their minds after his narrative no shadow of mistrust or suspicion of the earnest and devoted man lingered. Then after the prayer of glad thanksgiving, they gave him counsel how best to win the hearts of their suspicious, jealous countrymen.

**Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law.** The Greek word rendered 'thousands' is even stronger,—'myriads,' 'tens of thousands.' We must bear in mind that James was speaking not of the Christian Jews of Jerusalem only, but of that vast multitude which was in the habit of coming up yearly to keep the feast of Pentecost in the Holy City, and who at that moment were present in Jerusalem. Of all the great Jewish festivals, Pentecost attracted the largest number of pilgrims from distant countries. This in great measure was owing to the danger of travel in early spring or late autumn, which was an effectual bar to pilgrims from a distance coming up in great numbers to the Passover or feast of Tabernacles. We read in Acts iv. 4, how the number of 'believers' in the city was about five thousand. This was some twenty-four years



back, and during this long period Christianity had continued to spread with a strange and, in some places, with a startling rapidity. We must remember the myriads here spoken of include the Jewish Christians of all lands.

'But,' James continues, 'these Jews who have accepted Jesus as Messiah are all zealous,' more accurately rendered, 'are all *scalots* of the law.' The Jews of the first century in great numbers were willing to acknowledge as Messiah, that Crucified One whom so many had *seen* after He was risen from the dead; but they were reluctant to give up their privileges as a chosen race, and so they clung to their law and its stern restrictions with an attachment more devoted than ever. The hatred of the Jews for Paul sprang from their consciousness that he looked upon this sacred law as having done its work, and consequently doomed to vanish away.

A large body of these Jewish Christians subsequently withdrew from the Church; these are known in ecclesiastical history as Nazarenes and Ebionites. The latter sect was very widely spread, and counted in its ranks great numbers of the chosen people. They rejected the authority and writings of St. Paul, branding him as an apostate. They held, also, erroneous views respecting the person of Christ. This Judaizing sect was very numerous even as late as the close of the fourth century.

Ver. 21. **And they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs.** This was, no doubt, the general opinion current among those Jewish Christians who had not personally come under the influence of Paul. A widespread feeling existed in Jewish Christian communities that the famous apostle of the Gentiles taught the chosen people 'to forsake Moses,' to give up their cherished rites and ceremonies, to discontinue in their children that peculiar and time-honoured custom of circumcision which for so many centuries had distinguished the child of Israel from the child of the Gentile foreigner. This assertion was false. Paul's teaching here is best summarised in his own words to the Corinthian Church: 'Is any man called being circumcised? let him not become uncircumcised. Is any called in uncircumcision? let him not be circumcised. Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God. Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called' (1 Cor. vii. 18-20). Paul never taught the Jewish Christian to abandon the law and the customs of his fathers. He himself, on the contrary, on several occasions conspicuously observed the strictest rites of Judaism; as, for instance, when he shaved his head at Cenchrea, when he lived as a Jew with the Jews, when, in the circumstances about to be narrated, he took upon himself the Nazaritic vow. Yet, as it has been well observed, 'fanaticism is sometimes clear-sighted in its bitterness, and the Judaizers felt that when it was proclaimed that *circumcision was nothing* in its bearing on man's relations to God, the day would come at no far distant date when circumcision would cease to be practised, and the time-honoured ceremonial law of Moses, which enjoined it as the initial and principal rite, would become a dead letter.

Ver. 22. **What is it therefore? the multitude must needs come together: for they will hear that thou art come.** 'Seeing, now, this is the

state of things, that you, Paul, are looked upon by a large number of our countrymen with jealous suspicion and dislike, let us consider what is *best* under the circumstances for you to do; for it is certain that out of all these multitudes of foreign Jews come up to keep Pentecost in Jerusalem, a great number will always be watching you and your actions, to see whether what they have heard alleged against you be just, for the news of your arrival will be soon noised abroad.'

Ver. 23. **Do therefore this that we say unto thee: We have four men which have a vow on them.** 'We,' that is, James the presiding elder and his brother-presbyters of the Jerusalem Church. The advice which was tendered, and which Paul followed, was the counsel of the whole assembly. The 'four men' here spoken of were, of course, Christian Jews, and were doubtless members of one of the Jerusalem congregations. It is curious to observe how, in the Christian brotherhood of the Holy City, the old Jewish customs were still rigidly observed. Doubtless this was owing in great measure to the influence of their presiding elder, James 'the Lord's brother,' as he was called. He, we know, from the tradition preserved by Hegesippus (in Eus. H. E. iii. 23), lived the life of a Nazarite, bound by a perpetual vow like Samson and Samuel, and possibly like John the Baptist. 'James drank,' we read, 'no wine nor strong drink, neither did he eat flesh. No razor ever touched his head; he did not anoint himself with oil; he did not use the bath. . . . He would enter into the temple alone, and be found there kneeling on his knees, and asking forgiveness for the people; so that his knees grew hard like a camel's knees, because he was ever upon them worshipping God, and asking forgiveness for the people.'

Thus the advice to Paul to associate himself with these men came from one a perpetual Nazarite himself. These four poor Jewish Christians of Jerusalem had taken the Nazaritic vow. This involved their leading an ascetic life for a certain time, usually (when the vow was for a season only) for thirty days. When the time specified in the vow was completed, a certain group of offerings had to be presented in the temple. They could not legally be released from the obligations they had taken upon themselves, until these offerings had been presented; and it seems to have been the custom for the wealthier Jews to take upon them the expenses and cost of these offerings for their poorer brethren, and so enable them to complete their vow. Such a deed of benevolence was looked upon by the more earnest Jews as an act of special merit. Josephus tells us of Agrippa the First, who, on his arrival in Jerusalem after having obtained the crown of Palestine, paid the expenses of many poor Nazarites who were waiting to be released from their vows. This was the king's thankoffering for his good fortune. It was also an act well calculated to win the hearts of his more zealous Jewish subjects. In the Gemara we read how Alexander Jannæus contributed towards supplying nine hundred victims for three hundred Nazarites.

Ver. 24. **Them take, and purify thyself with them, and be at charges with them, that they may shave their heads.** Better, be at charges for them; pay all the expenses consequent on their Nazarite vow. These charges were, for each of the four persons, an *he-lamb* for a burnt-offering, a

ewe-lamb for a sin-offering, a ram for a peace-offering, together with a basket of unleavened bread, cakes of fine flour mingled with oil, and a drink-offering (see Num. vi. 14-18), in addition to which there was a fee to the priest or Levite for the act of shaving the head. This involved a considerable expense, and we can well conceive that, in many instances, without the help of the rich or comparatively rich, the poor man often would have been unable to complete his Nazarite vow.

Now, James would know from his past history, that Paul,—with all his liberal views, with all his anxiety to remove stumbling-blocks out of the way of the Gentile nations willing to become servants of Christ,—still revered and even loved to share in the ancient time-honoured practices of his people. Only three or four years before, Paul had taken in Cenchrea this very Nazarite's vow (see Acts xviii. 18). That act of the Gentile apostle was no doubt well known to James and the Jerusalem presbyters. Such a gift, too, from Paul, who was known in all the churches as one who supported himself by the labour of his hands, would, besides testifying to his love for the old Jewish customs, bear striking witness to his generosity and ready self-denial. It would indeed be a notable gift, the paying these poor men's expenses in the temple, for the travelling tentmaker Paul (see Acts xx. 34, 35, where the generous apostle's words give us some insight into his character). It seems to have been the custom in those times among the Jews, for certain persons who had not, in the first instance, taken the obligation of a Nazarite upon themselves, to associate themselves towards the end of the period for which the vow was taken with Nazarites who had taken the vow, and to join with them in the final process of purification, which lasted apparently, as in this case, for seven days, and then to defray for the whole of the company, many or few, all the cost of the sacrifice. This way of taking on oneself the obligations of a Nazarite was considered a devout and meritorious act.

And all may know that those things, whereof they were informed concerning thee, are nothing; but that thou thyself also walkest orderly, and keepest the law. James thought that nothing would be so likely to conciliate the 'conservative' party among the Jewish Christians as the sight of the well-known apostle of the Gentiles sharing in, and assisting at his own cost others to take part in one of the cherished Jewish customs. Surely one who could thus publicly by example and teaching maintain the rigid observance of the ceremonial law, would never sanction disloyalty to the national traditions of Israel.

How all this ended, we shall see three or four verses on. The counsel was well meant, and Paul acted kindly and generously in the matter, endeavouring to win the hearts of his bigoted exclusive countrymen. But it does not seem as though his Master smiled upon the transaction. It certainly utterly failed. In Paul's loving heart there was an intense longing to win the covenant people, and so he was ready to make any sacrifice to attain this end. But the party of 'zealots' among the Jews of the first century were after all right in their estimate of what would result from Paul's teaching. They foresaw that if the Gentiles were freed from the law of Moses and all its burthen-some rites, and at the same time were put, as

regards the inheritance of the kingdom of heaven, on a footing of perfect equality with the Jews, the time would surely come when the Jew would ask, 'To what purpose availeth the keeping of the old law and the hard rites?' and so they surely foresaw that the old order of things would at no distant period give place to the new, and the Jew would no longer be distinguished from the Gentile.

Ver. 25. *As touching the Gentiles which believe, we have written and concluded that they observe no such thing.* James and the Jerusalem elders were careful—after they had advised Paul to assist these poor Nazarites, and to associate himself as one zealous for the law of Moses with them in their vow of asceticism—to repeat that they had no desire whatever to interfere with that perfect liberty of action, and freedom from all the restraints of the law of Moses, which had already, in a solemn apostolic conclave at Jerusalem, been conceded to Gentile Christians: none of these austere practices like the Nazarite's vow were to be expected from any except a born Jew and then James proceeded to enumerate the four points in a way connected with the Mosaic law, but which really belonged to a far broader and more solemn code. See notes on chap. xv., and Excursus following that chapter.

*Paul takes the Nazarite's Vow—The Uproar in the Temple—He is arrested by the Roman Soldiers and interrogated by the Officer in Command, who allows him to address the Crowd, 26-40.*

Ver. 26. Then Paul took the men, and the next day purifying himself with them, entered into the temple. Dr. Schaff (*Hist. of the Apostolic Church*, Book I., 'Missions') well remarks on this concession of Paul to the request of James: 'The position of James, as his martyrdom a few years after shows, was at all events one of extreme difficulty; since, amidst the growing obduracy of the nation, and in sight of its impending doom, he still had to stand—for this was his proper mission—as the connecting link between the old and the new dispensations, to rescue as many as possible from the destruction. And as to Paul, he was here not in his proper Gentile-Christian field of labour. His conduct on other occasions proves that he was far from allowing himself to be restricted in this field. He reserved to himself entire independence in his operations. But he stood now on the venerable ground of the Jewish-Christian mother Church, where he had to respect the customs of the fathers, and the authority of James, the regular bishop. Clearly conscious of already possessing righteousness and salvation in Christ, he accommodated himself, with the best and noblest intentions, to the weaker brethren. Though himself free, he became to them that were under the law, as under the law; to the Jews, a Jew; to those who were not free, a servant, that he might gain some, according to his own maxim (1 Cor. ix. 19-23). Should he therefore, in this particular instance, have yielded too much, it would at all events not have been a betrayal of his convictions;—this is precluded by the firm, logical consistency of his character,—but a personal sacrifice for the great end of the peace and unity of the Church. And surely this sacrifice must have been duly appreciated by the more moderate and noble-minded of the Jewish Christians.'

Surely these records of the 'Acts,' with their unflinching truth, speak with a strange mighty

power to us after all these ages. We feel, while we read of the awful fall and miserable death of one of the Twelve (chap. i. 16-20); of the sin and punishment of two of the most notable believers of the first days (chap. v. 1-11); of the jealous murmuring and discontent of the poor saints (chap. vi. 1); of the failure in courage of Mark, and the bitter quarrel of two of the most prominent Christian leaders (chap. xv. 38-40); and, here, of this doubtful compromise of Paul and James, that we have before us a real picture, painted from life, of the Church of the first days, by one who never shrinks to paint the errors, the faults, and the grievous mistakes of even the most distinguished of the first believers. Nothing is concealed, nothing is even partially veiled. On the same page with the splendid successes of the Christians of the first days, appear their failures; side by side with their supernatural powers are described their sins and human weaknesses. No careful reader can study these 'Acts' without gaining with every hour's work a surer confidence that he has before him a true and genuine record of the life of Christian men and women during the thirty years which immediately succeeded the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

To signify the accomplishment of the days of purification, until that an offering should be offered for every one of them. Expositors have differed slightly as to the meaning of the original words here. The literal translation here would be, 'declaring the fulfilment of the days of purification until the offering was offered for every one of them;' that is to say, Paul entered the temple declaring [to the priests] when the days of purification would be completed for himself and the four, namely, in seven days; and that then, at the close of them, the customary offerings for all of them would be made; or, in other words, Paul announced to the temple authorities the interval, viz. seven days, between this declaration of his and the end of the vow and the presenting the required offerings. Dean Alford purposes to translate, 'signifying their intention of fulfilling;' but this is inadmissible. Dean Howson (*St. Paul*, chap. xxi.) would render the whole passage thus: 'He entered into the temple, giving public notice that the days of purification were fulfilled, [and stayed there] till the offering for each one of the Nazarites was brought.' If this rendering be adopted, we must understand that Paul entered the temple and told the priests that the period of the Nazaritic vow was accomplished; and he waited then within the sacred enclosure till the necessary offerings were made for each of them, and their hair cut and burnt in the sacred fire. Wieseler also adopts this view. [The rendering, however, given above, which looks on the announcement of the days of purification as having reference to the future, on the whole appears best and simplest.] Seven days was the ordinary period for the more solemn purifications. See Ex. xxix. 37; Lev. xii. 2, xiii. 6; Num. xii. 14, 15, xix. 14-16, etc.

Ver. 27. And when the seven days were almost ended. Or, literally rendered, 'were on the point of being completed;' that is, when the seven days, 'the days of purification,' announced to the priests as the time to which the vow of the four Nazarites would extend, and also the period of the apostle's sharing in that consecration, were coming to an end.

The Jews which were of Asia, when they saw

him in the temple, stirred up all the people, and laid hands on him. The Jews who had come up as pilgrims to the Holy City from Proconsular Asia, of which Ephesus was the capital. Paul, we know, had spent some three years in Ephesus and Asia, and was well known to the Jews there, by many of whom he had been bitterly opposed and persecuted. No doubt many of these Asian Jews were from Ephesus, the chief city, and recognised Trophimus their fellow-townsmen (ver. 29). These Jews had been watching Paul, with strange excited interest, as he passed in and out of the temple courts with the marks of his Nazarite's vow upon him, and at length they saw him in company with a Gentile (Trophimus) well known to them. He was, no doubt, in the outer court of the temple, where aliens might walk and gaze unhindered; and these excited men at once concluded Paul was about to proceed with the stranger into those sacred precincts reserved strictly for the children of Israel, and at once raised the cry, charging him with the crime of profaning the Holy Place.

Ver. 28. Crying out, Men of Israel, help: This is the man that teacheth all men everywhere against the people, and the law, and this place. The immediate provocation no doubt was the fact of Paul being in company with one known to be a Gentile. Paul they hated; they had watched him for several days with some surprise as a Nazarite constantly going in and out of the second court, where was situated the chambers where the Nazarites performed their vows (Middoth, quoted by Howson, *St. Paul*, chap. xxi.), and into which no Gentile on pain of death might enter. After some days they saw him in the outer court (the court of the Gentiles), with Trophimus the Ephesian; they at once concluded he had been taking this uncircumcised Gentile with him into the inner court, where only an Israelite might penetrate. The angry men at once seized him, and, acting on a mere suspicion, directly charged him with sacrilege. But they accused him, besides, of having taught all men everywhere not only 'against the Law and the Temple,' which was the old charge brought against Stephen and a greater than Stephen, but of having taught all men 'against the people.' This was really the great accusation which the Jews brought in the case of Paul, and was of course based upon his well-known and famous work among the Gentile peoples, whom Paul taught everywhere were fellow-heirs with Israel of the kingdom. This levelling up of the long-despised alien, the rigid and exclusive Jew bitterly rebelled against, hence the burning hostility against Paul.

And further brought Greeks into the temple, and hath polluted this holy place. That is to say, Paul had brought Trophimus into that part of the temple interdicted to foreigners, not being Jews. The first court, called 'the Court of the Gentiles,' could be entered by all—Jew and Gentile alike.

The temple of Jerusalem in the first century of the Christian era was erected on the old area once occupied by the threshing-floor of Araunah, but greatly enlarged by means of laborious substructions after King David's death. The temples of Solomon and Zerubbabel had successively stood upon it, and now the partially new 'house of Herod' occupied the same place.

The outer court was a square; it was known in the old prophetic books as the 'Court of the Lord's House.' Josephus calls it 'the Outer Temple.' In the Apocrypha and Talmud it is known as 'the Mountain of the House.' In this enclosure Gentiles might walk. It was paved with stones of various colours, and was surrounded with a covered colonnade of great magnificence. About the south-east angle of this court was the Porch of Solomon where Jesus walked (John x. 23). It was in this great outer court that the money-changers kept their exchange tables, and where beasts for sacrifice were sold. It was here, too, that Peter and John nearly a quarter of a century before had healed the lame man (Acts iii.). This outer court was connected with the city and the Mount Zion quarter by means of a bridge over the intervening valley.

Near the north-west corner of this court of the Gentiles arose that series of enclosed terraces, communicating with one another by flights of steps, on the summit of which was the sanctuary. A balustrade of stone fenced off these more sacred enclosures. This was the middle wall of partition alluded to, Eph. ii. 14. The first flight of steps led up to a platform called the Court of the Women, so named because no woman of Israel might penetrate beyond this enclosure. The Nazarite chambers led out of this terrace or court, which also it is supposed contained the treasury. It was here that St. Paul was believed to have introduced Trophimus. Above this terrace were the Court of Israel and the Court of the Priests. Here the sacrifices were offered. The temple itself, including the vestibule, the Holy Place, and the Holy of Holies, rose above all these raised terraces, and was approached by a flight of twelve steps from the Court of the Priests.

Ver. 29. (For they had seen before with him in the city Trophimus an Ephesian, whom they supposed Paul had brought into the temple.) Trophimus was one of the little band which accompanied Paul from Philippi in Macedonia to Jerusalem. Being an Ephesian, he would be well known by sight to many of the Jews from Asia. There was no excuse either for Paul or Trophimus, they considered; the prohibition to pass the balustrade leading to the steps by which Israelites ascended to the Court of the Women and the chambers of the Nazarites was well known, and was, besides, engraved on pillars before the eyes of all who walked in the outer Gentile porch. One of these inscriptions, which must once have formed part of the balustrade and low wall in question, the recent excavations of the Palestine Exploration Society have brought to light. Professor Plumptre thus translates it:—'NO MAN OF ALIEN RACE IS TO ENTER WITHIN THE BALUSTRADE AND FENCE THAT GOES ROUND THE TEMPLE; IF ANY ONE IS TAKEN IN THE ACT, LET HIM KNOW THAT HE HAS HIMSELF TO BLAME FOR THE PENALTY OF DEATH THAT FOLLOWS.' Thus the temple was really looked upon as including all the courts and buildings which were surrounded by the Court of the Gentiles. It was this doom which Trophimus the Ephesian was supposed to have brought on himself. But Paul in the eyes of the rigid Jews was the most guilty person, as having induced the Gentile, as they fancied, to pass the forbidden barrier.

The feverish anxiety of the Jews to maintain all their ancient privileges and customs, and their

hatred of all foreign interference, was growing, it must be remembered, every year. The doomed Holy City was filled with wild societies of 'zealots' and other unions of bigoted and fanatic Jews. When the events related in this chapter were taking place, little more than ten years remained for Jerusalem. We are now speaking of what took place A.D. 58–59. In A.D. 70 not one stone of all this superb pile of buildings then glittering with its wealth of gold and marble remained on another. No Jew was allowed to linger even near the scene of so many ancient Hebrew glories—of such awful disaster and shame.

Ver. 30. And all the city was moved, and the people ran together. The rumour quickly reached the quarter of 'Zion' that the notorious Paul had been caught in an act of sacrilege in the temple, and crowds of Jews would quickly come hurrying across the bridge which led from the temple into the city.

And they took Paul, and drew him out of the temple; and forthwith the doors were shut. Paul was evidently at this time in the first of the inner courts, probably in the neighbourhood of the Nazarite chambers, and certainly not with Trophimus—this was clearly a gratuitous supposition on the part of his enemies. They had been seen together in the city, perhaps in the Court of the Gentiles; they were known from old memories in Ephesus to be close friends, and so the rumour got abroad. It is easy to understand how it was repeated from mouth to mouth, in the first instance perhaps as a probability, then as a fact. 'The doors' which were shut were most likely those on the eastern side, made of Corinthian brass, very strong and massive. It has been suggested that these great gates were closed to intimate that the worship and sacrifice in the temple were temporarily suspended, in order that it might be ascertained whether or no the temple had been profaned.

It is, however, more likely that these doors were shut, and Paul thrust out, to guard against the possibility of the temple floors being stained with blood and thus polluted in the event of Paul and his supposed companion being summarily put to death by the people. This was done by the Levites in charge of the 'House.'

Ver. 31. And as they went about to kill him, tidings came unto the chief captain of the band, that all Jerusalem was in an uproar. Preparations apparently were actually going on to execute summary justice on the apostle. The crowds that came hurrying over the bridge no doubt hindered the arrangements for his death, and gave time to the Roman officer to come upon the scene of the tumult. Philo tells us that any uncircumcised person who ventured within the separating wall might be stoned to death without any further trial. But this would only apply to the case of the Ephesian Trophimus, who was *not* found in the temple. As for Paul, any such procedure in his case would have been simply a murder, hence the rapid interference of the Roman authority. 'The chief captain,' literally 'chiliarch,' or chief of a thousand, was Claudius Lysias (chap. xxiii. 26). He commanded the division of the Roman force which garrisoned Jerusalem, and was stationed in the fortress of Antonia, a castle built so as to overlook the temple and its courts.

This castle (ver. 37) or tower of Antonia, where the Roman force which at that period watched the temple was lodged, was built by the Asmonean princes for a residence under the name of Baris. Herod the Great rebuilt it with considerable splendour, and named it 'Antonia,' after the Triumvir Mark Antony.

This fortress stood at the north-west corner of the temple area, and it communicated with the temple cloisters by means of two flights of steps. It stood on lower ground than the platform of the House, but it was raised to such a height that at least one of its four turrets commanded a view of what was going on in the courts within.

The ordinary Roman garrison was probably increased at the times of the great Jewish festivals such as Pentecost, as in these troubled and exciting periods, when the people were full of religious fanaticism, an outbreak among the pilgrims gathered together was not unusual. The officer here called the chief captain was commander of a thousand men. This appears to have been the number of the forces stationed during this Pentecost in Antonia.

Ver. 33. *Then the chief captain came near, and took him, and commanded him to be bound with two chains.* The 'chief captain' assumed that Paul was a criminal and guilty of some very grave crime against society. He himself evidently suspected he was a well-known Egyptian rebel who had hitherto eluded capture. He orders him to be chained by each hand to a soldier for security's sake, and then he proceeds at once to interrogate him.

Ver. 34. *And some cried one thing, and some another, among the multitude.* The same angry, confused murmur of voices and cries were heard among the crowd as at Ephesus in the amphitheatre when the Jews accused Paul and his friends. The Greek words used to describe the confused cries of the populace are the same in both places (see chap. xix. 32). Two verses further on (ver. 36), we read how the same sounds fell on the ears of the Roman captain and his soldiery as twenty-five years before were listened to and obeyed by the Roman governor Pilate, when *Another* was accused and reviled by a Jewish mob of fanatics gathered together at a solemn feast in this same Jerusalem. Now as then, the people cried, 'Away with him!' Poor misguided ones, they knew not what they asked!

*He commanded him to be carried into the castle.* The Greek word here translated 'castle' signifies literally 'encampment.' The meaning is, the Roman officer directed that Paul should be conveyed up the steps, away from the angry multitude who would have killed him, into that part of the fortress of Antonia used as the *barracks* of the imperial soldiery, where were no doubt strong guard-rooms set apart for the custody of prisoners.

Ver. 37. *And as Paul was to be led into the castle, he said unto the chief captain, May I speak unto thee? who said, Canst thou speak Greek?* At the foot of the stairs leading up to the Tower of Antonia (the Castle), the pressure of the angry throng apparently obliged the Roman guard to take up Paul in their arms, and closing round, to carry him out of harm's way up the steps. Out of reach of the angry crowd, and standing as it seems on the steps at the entrance of the tower, this strange prisoner turned quietly

to the captain and addressed him in Greek, a language the Roman was surprised to hear from this eastern pilgrim, as he supposed him to be. He had no idea that the prisoner was a person of high culture; the Roman officer at once perceiving the accused was no ordinary man, proceeded to interrogate him.

Ver. 38. *Art thou not that Egyptian, which before these days madest an uproar, and leddest out into the wilderness four thousand men that were murderers?* The 'Egyptian' for whom the chief captain had mistaken Paul was a notorious character in those days. Josephus in his writings mentions him twice. He appears to have been a pretended sorcerer, who also gave himself out as a prophet. He was in reality a leader of one of those robber bands, which in the disturbed years which preceded the great Jewish rebellion, infested Judæa and the neighbouring countries. The name 'Sicarii,' assassins, was derived from 'sica,' a dagger or short sword these robbers wore beneath their clothing. This could be used in a crowd with fatal effect without being observed. The 'assassins,' in these fierce lawless times, were often hired by the leading men of the country for purposes of murder. This 'Egyptian' in the reign of Nero, we read, promised his followers that at his word the walls of Jerusalem would fall down, and that he and they should enter the city over the ruins. Felix, the Roman procurator, however, attacked and defeated this predatory band with signal success, killing 400 and taking 200 prisoners; the remainder and their leader were put to flight and escaped.

A good deal has been written as to the discrepancy in the numbers which made up this robber band; St. Luke here in the 'Acts,' and Josephus in each of his two accounts of the rebellion, giving different estimates of the force.

It is, however, comparatively easy fairly to reconcile the three accounts. The Egyptian had gathered a band of Sicarii or armed assassins. With these, at one period of his career, a great multitude, some 30,000 in number, of people were associated, probably unarmed and undisciplined. The Procurator Felix, however, attacked and defeated the comparatively small *armed body of Sicarii*; of these he killed 400 and captured 200 prisoners. The remainder and their leader escaped. With these perhaps fled some of the deluded people who had joined the impostor prophet. It is also more than probable that the three accounts speak of different epochs of this outbreak, when the number of the followers of the Egyptian would be variously estimated.

From the words of the chief captain to Paul, it was no doubt a notorious fact that the 'Egyptian impostor' in question was an illiterate person, and did not speak 'Greek.'

Ver. 39. *But Paul said, I am a man which am a Jew of Tarsus, a city of Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city.* If he were indeed a citizen of Tarsus, he would have real claims upon the Roman authorities for protection. Tarsus as a city stood high in public estimation. It was not only famous as a university and seat of learning, but was the most important centre in that part of the Empire, and possessed many privileges. It bore on its coins the proud title of METROPOLIS AUTONOMOS, 'the independent capital city.'

Ver. 40. *And when he had given him licence.*







*From photograph.*

TARSUS.

There is nothing to call for the surprise which some have expressed at this permission being granted by the Roman authority for the suspected Paul to speak to the crowd. He had satisfied the officer that he was not the dangerous rebel whom he had taken him for, and had assured him who he was and whence he came; besides which, there was evidently something in the apostle's manner and bearing which ever gained respect and confidence. We have in these 'Acts' several marked instances of this strange power Paul gained so quickly over those with whom he was brought into contact.

Paul stood on the stairs, and beckoned with the hand unto the people. And when there was made a great silence, he spake unto them. 'It was a strange scene for that feast of Pentecost. The face and form of the speaker may have been seen from time to time by some during his passing visits to Jerusalem, but there must have been many who had not heard him take any part in public action since the day when, nearly a quarter of a

century before, he had kept the garments of those who were stoning Stephen; and now he was there, accused of the self-same crimes, making his defence before a crowd as wild and frenzied as that of which he had then been the leader' (Plumptre).

In the Hebrew tongue. That is, he spoke this address to his fellow-countrymen in that Hebrew dialect, the Syro-Chaldaic or Aramaic, the mother-tongue of the Jews in Judæa at that time.

This would be the language best loved by the fanatics who were thirsting for his blood. With the old Hebrew words he would be sure to speak more directly home to the Jewish heart, whose guiding principle was an intense, often an unreasoning attachment to their country, its ancient language, customs, and law.

No doubt 'the great silence,' the hush which fell on this angry, vociferating crowd, was produced by the sound of the loved Hebrew words.

## CHAPTER XXII.

### *Paul's Speech to the Jews from the Steps leading to the Tower of Antonia.*

- 1 <sup>a</sup> **M**EN,<sup>1</sup> brethren, and fathers, hear ye my defence *which I* <sup>a</sup> Ch. vii. 2.  
 2 <sup>b</sup> *make* now unto you. (And when they heard that he spake in <sup>b</sup> the Hebrew tongue to them, they kept the more <sup>b</sup> See ch. xxi. 40.  
 3 silence: and he saith,) I am verily a man *which am* <sup>c</sup> a Jew, <sup>c</sup> Rom. xi. 1; 2 Cor. xi. 22; Phil. iii. 5. See ch. xxi. 39.  
 4 born in Tarsus, *a city* in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city <sup>d</sup> at the feet of <sup>d</sup> Gamaliel, *and* taught according to <sup>e</sup> the perfect manner <sup>e</sup> of the law of the fathers, and <sup>f</sup> was zealous towards <sup>f</sup> See 2 Kings iv. 38. <sup>g</sup> Ch. v. 34. <sup>h</sup> So ch. xxvi. 5.  
 5 God, <sup>g</sup> as ye all are this day. And <sup>i</sup> I persecuted <sup>h</sup> this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and <sup>i</sup> See ch. xxi. 20.  
 6 women. As also the high priest doth bear me witness, and all <sup>j</sup> the estate of the elders: <sup>j</sup> from whom also I received letters <sup>k</sup> unto <sup>k</sup> the brethren, and went to Damascus, to bring them <sup>l</sup> which were there, bound unto Jerusalem, for to be punished. <sup>l</sup> Rom. x. 2. <sup>m</sup> So ver. 19. See ch. viii. 3. <sup>n</sup> See ch. ix. 2. <sup>o</sup> Lu xxii. 66 (Gk.). <sup>p</sup> Ch. ix. 2, xxvi. 10, 11. <sup>q</sup> See Jo. xxi. 23.  
 7 <sup>o</sup> And it came to pass that, as I made my journey, and was come nigh unto Damascus about noon, suddenly there shone <sup>o</sup> To ver 11, ch. ix. 3-8, and xxvi. 12-18.  
 8 from heaven <sup>p</sup> a great light round about me. And I fell unto the ground, and heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why  
 9 persecutest thou me? And I answered, Who art thou, Lord? And he said unto me, I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou  
 10 persecutest. And they that were with me saw indeed the light, and were afraid; <sup>q</sup> but they <sup>q</sup> heard not the voice of him that <sup>r</sup> See Jo. viii. 43.

<sup>1</sup> omit 'Men.'

<sup>2</sup> more literally, 'according to the strictness of the ancestral law,' etc.

<sup>3</sup> more accurately, 'out of heaven.'

<sup>4</sup> Some, though by no means all, of the more ancient authorities omit the words, 'and were afraid.'



10 spake to me. And I said, What shall I do, Lord? And the Lord said unto me, Arise, and go into Damascus; and there it shall be told thee of all *things* which are appointed for thee to do. And when I could not see for the glory of that light, being led by the hand of them that were with me, I came into Damascus. And <sup>q</sup>one Ananias, a <sup>r</sup>devout man according to the law, <sup>s</sup>having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt <sup>t</sup>there, <sup>u</sup>Came unto me, and stood, <sup>v</sup>and said unto me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight. And the same hour I looked up upon him. And he said, "The God of our fathers hath <sup>w</sup>chosen thee, that *thou* shouldst <sup>x</sup>know his will, and <sup>y</sup>see *that* <sup>z</sup>Just One, and shouldst <sup>aa</sup>hear the voice of his mouth. For thou shalt be his <sup>ab</sup>witness <sup>ac</sup>unto all men of what <sup>ad</sup>thou hast seen and <sup>ae</sup>heard. And now why tarriest thou? arise, and <sup>af</sup>be baptized, and <sup>ag</sup>wash away thy sins, <sup>ah</sup>calling on the name of the Lord.<sup>6</sup> And it came to pass that, <sup>ai</sup>when I was come again to Jerusalem, even while I prayed in the temple, I was in <sup>aj</sup>a trance,<sup>7</sup> And <sup>ak</sup>saw him saying unto me, Make haste, and get *thee* quickly out of Jerusalem: <sup>al</sup>for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me. And I said, Lord, they know that <sup>am</sup>"I imprisoned and <sup>an</sup>beat in every synagogue them that believed on thee: And when the blood of thy <sup>ao</sup>martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by, and <sup>ap</sup>consenting unto his death,<sup>8</sup> and <sup>aq</sup>kept<sup>9</sup> the raiment of them that slew him. And he said unto me, Depart: <sup>ar</sup>for I will send thee <sup>as</sup>far hence unto the Gentiles.

22 And they gave him audience unto this word, and *then* <sup>at</sup>lifted up their voices,<sup>10</sup> and said, "Away with such *a fellow* from the earth: for <sup>au</sup>it is not fit that he should live. And as they cried out, and <sup>av</sup>cast off *their* clothes, and threw dust into the air, 24 The chief captain commanded him to be brought into <sup>aw</sup>the castle, and bade that he should be <sup>ax</sup>examined by scourging; 25 that he might know wherefore they cried so against him. And as they bound him with thongs,<sup>11</sup> Paul said unto the centurion that stood *by*, Is it lawful for you to scourge a man *that is* a 26 <sup>ay</sup>Roman, and <sup>az</sup>uncondemned? When the centurion heard *that*, he went and told the chief captain, saying, Take heed 27 what thou doest: <sup>ba</sup>for this man is a Roman. Then the chief

<sup>6</sup> *more accurately*, 'and standing over me, said.'

<sup>7</sup> *The older authorities here, for* 'the name of the Lord,' *read simply* 'his name.'

<sup>8</sup> *better rendered*, 'I fell into a trance,' or 'ecstasy.'

<sup>9</sup> *The older authorities omit the words*, 'unto his death.'

<sup>10</sup> *literally*, 'and keeping.'

<sup>11</sup> *better rendered*, 'and when they had stretched him out to the thongs,' or, *as some prefer*, 'with the thongs.'

<sup>12</sup> *more accurately rendered* 'what art thou about to do?' *The older authorities omit* 'Take heed.'

<sup>q</sup> Ch. ix. 10.  
<sup>r</sup> See ch. x. 2.  
<sup>s</sup> See ch. vi. 3.

<sup>t</sup> Ch. ix. 17, 18.

<sup>u</sup> Ch. iii. 13.  
<sup>v</sup> 30.  
<sup>w</sup> Ch. xxvi. 16 (Gk.).

<sup>x</sup> Cp. Jo. vii. 17.

<sup>y</sup> Ver. 18;  
ch. xxiii. 11;  
1 Cor. ix. 1,  
xv. 8.

<sup>z</sup> See ch. iii. 14.

<sup>aa</sup> 1 Cor. xi. 23;  
Gal. i. 22.

<sup>ab</sup> Ch. xxvi. 16.

<sup>ac</sup> Ch. xxiii. 11.

<sup>ad</sup> Ch. ix. 17,  
xxvi. 16.

<sup>ae</sup> Cp. Gal. i. 22.

<sup>af</sup> Ch. ix. 18.

<sup>ag</sup> Ps. li. 2;  
1 Cor. vi. 11;  
Heb. x. 22.

<sup>ah</sup> So ch. ii. 38.

<sup>ai</sup> See ch. ix. 14.

<sup>aj</sup> Ch. ix. 26;  
2 Cor. xii. 27

<sup>ak</sup> Ch. x. 10,  
xi. 5. Cp.  
2 Cor. xii.

<sup>al</sup> 1-4.

<sup>am</sup> Ver. 14.

<sup>an</sup> Cp. ch. ix. 29.

<sup>ao</sup> See ver. 4.

<sup>ap</sup> Ch. xxvi. 11.

<sup>aq</sup> So Mat. x. 17.

<sup>ar</sup> Rev. ii. 13 (Engl.).

<sup>as</sup> Ch. viii. 1.

<sup>at</sup> So ch. xxvi. 10.

<sup>au</sup> Ch. vii. 58.

<sup>av</sup> Ch. xxvi. 17.

<sup>aw</sup> See ch. ix. 15, xxviii. 28.

<sup>ax</sup> See ch. ii. 39.

<sup>ay</sup> See 1. u. xi. 27.

<sup>az</sup> See ch. xxi. 36.

<sup>ba</sup> So ch. xxv. 24.

<sup>bb</sup> Cp. ch. vii. 58.

<sup>bc</sup> See ch. xxi. 34.

<sup>bd</sup> Ver. 29.

<sup>be</sup> Ch. xvi. 37.

- captain came, and said unto him, Tell me, art thou a Roman?  
 28 He said, Yea. And the chief captain answered, With a great sum obtained I this freedom.<sup>13</sup> And Paul said, But I was *free*  
 29 born.<sup>14</sup> Then straightway they departed from him which should have examined him: and the chief captain also <sup>a</sup> was afraid, after he knew that he was a Roman, and because he had bound him.  
 30 On the morrow, <sup>b</sup> because he would have known the certainty<sup>15</sup> wherefore he was accused of the Jews, he loosed him from <sup>c</sup> his bands,<sup>16</sup> and commanded the chief priests and all their <sup>d</sup> council<sup>17</sup> to appear,<sup>18</sup> and brought Paul <sup>e</sup> down, and set *him* before them.

<sup>a</sup> So ch. xvi. 38.  
<sup>b</sup> Ch. xxiii. 28  
<sup>c</sup> Ch. xxvi. 29 (Gk.). Cp. ch. xxi. 33.  
<sup>d</sup> Ch. xxiii. 1, 6, 15, 20, 28, xxiv. 20.  
<sup>e</sup> See Mat. v. 22.  
<sup>f</sup> Ch. xxi. 35, xxiii. 10, 15, 28 (Gk.).

<sup>13</sup> *more exactly translated*, 'this citizenship.'

<sup>14</sup> *better rendered*, 'but I was *so* born.'

<sup>15</sup> *more accurately rendered*, 'wishing to know the certainty.'

<sup>16</sup> *The older authorities omit the words*, 'from his bands.'

<sup>17</sup> *According to the older authorities*, 'all the council.'

<sup>18</sup> *The older authorities read*, 'to come together.'

*Paul's Hebrew Speech to the Jewish Crowd in the Temple Court from the steps leading to the Antonia Tower, and the Tumult which succeeded it, 1-23.*

Ver. 1. Men, brethren, and fathers, hear ye my defence which I make now unto you. The accurate translation of the Greek word would be simply, 'Brethren and fathers.' It is noticeable that the opening words are the same as those used by Stephen in his great defence before the Sanhedrim (see chap. vii. 2). 'Brethren' expresses the love Paul bore to his fellow-countrymen the Jews. 'Fathers' seems to recognise the presence of some of the older and more prominent men of the Jerusalem Church, members, perhaps, of the Sanhedrim, certainly well-known scribes and elders of the Holy City. It has been suggested with some probability, that 'Brethren and fathers' was the received formula in addressing an assembly which included scribes and elders of the people.

Mr. Humphry, in his commentary on the 'Acts,' happily touches on the leading characteristic features of this speech: 'Though the subject-matter of this speech has been related before, it assumes here a fresh interest from the manner in which it is adapted to the occasion and the audience. The apostle is suspected of disaffection to the Mosaic law. In order to refute this charge, he addresses them in Hebrew; he dwells on his Jewish education, and on his early zeal for the law; he shows how at his conversion he was guided by Ananias, a man devout according to the law, and of good report among the Jews at Damascus, and how he subsequently worshipped in the temple at Jerusalem. So far they listen to him; but he no sooner touches on the promulgation of the gospel among the heathen (ver. 21) than he is interrupted, and his fate would probably have been the same as Stephen's, had he not been under the protection of the Roman captain.'

Ver. 2. And when they heard that he spake in the Hebrew tongue to them, they kept the more silence. He addresses his hearers in the

loved sacred language. They would be more likely, he knew, to listen to him whom they fancied was a blasphemer of the law of Moses and the temple, if they heard his account of himself in no hated Gentile language, but in the well-known cherished tongue of the people of God. It is clear from the narrative that the majority at least of his hearers would have perfectly understood Paul had he spoken in Greek. The Hebrew tongue was chosen because he knew they would listen to it, and the event shows he had judged them rightly. 'When they heard the first words spoken in their fathers' tongue,' we read, 'they kept the more silence.'

And he saith. The speech of Paul on the steps of the Antonia tower, as reported by the writer



Coin of Tarsus.

of the 'Acts,' contains three divisions:—1. Vers. 3-8 treat of his early life, and roughly sketch his story up to the day when the Heavenly Vision and Voice changed the whole current of his existence. 2. Vers. 9-16 relate in detail what took place in the days immediately following this Divine Vision. 3. Vers. 17-21 pursue the story of his life from the days which followed the Heavenly Vision on the Damascus road until the hour when a second time the Divine Voice spoke to him in the temple, and declared to him what should be the grand object of his life.

Ver. 3. I am verily a man which am a Jew. He starts at once with a statement calculated to allay the suspicions with which many of those who were infuriated against him, without knowing any.

thing really of his story, regarded him. 'I was a Jew,' he tells them.

Born in Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, yet brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of our fathers. 'And, although born,' he goes on to say, 'in the distant Gentile city of Tarsus, yet it was *here*, in our Holy City, that I received my education. My master was none other than the famous R. Gamaliel, so well known to every Jew. In those days I was trained by that great master as a Pharisee, to love and to practise all the strictness of our ancestral law.' [See the Galatian Epistle, i. 13, 14, where he speaks of his pre-eminence in those far-back days in all this learning, and how none of his fellow-students were able to compete with him in his knowledge of the law, and in his fervent zeal for the old sacred traditions of the Fathers.] The expression, 'at the feet of Gamaliel,' is strictly accurate. In the Jewish schools, the teacher sat and taught from a raised seat; the pupils sat round on low benches or on the floor, literally at the master's feet.

And was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day. 'What ye are now,' said the apostle, 'I was once—a *zealot*,' a word well known in the extremest phases of the religious life of that disastrous period in Judæa, 'a zealot for what I deemed was for the honour of God.'

Ver. 4. And I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women. In support of his assertion that he, too, was once a Jewish 'zealot,' he reminds them that he was formerly a bitter persecutor of 'this way'; there were doubtless those present in the listening crowd who well knew that these words of his were literally true.

He speaks of the Christian cause with the now familiar term—familiar, apparently, to friends and enemies of the Nazarene brotherhood—of 'this way.' It originated most likely from a loving memory of the Master's words, in which he claimed to be himself 'the way, and the truth, and the life' (see, too, the great prophecy of Isa. xl. 3, where the word 'way' may be said to have formed the burden of the solemn song). The significant words, 'unto the death,' seem to tell us that in those first early persecutions of the Nazarenes, Stephen the deacon was by no means the only martyr for the cause of the Lord Jesus.

Ver. 5. As also the high priest doth bear me witness, and all the estate of the elders. The 'high priest' in question was not the person holding that office at the present juncture, but the one who happened, at the time of the Damascus Mission, A.D. 37, to be in possession of that high office. The high priest who with the Sanhedrim gave Paul his credentials as inquisitor for Damascus and Syria, was probably Jonathan the successor and brother of Caiaphas. The reigning high priest at this period, A.D. 58, was Ananias. We have before noticed that in these last days of the Jewish power, the high-priestly office and dignity were not permanent, but were constantly transferred from one holder to another, the Roman authority claiming and exercising this right of raising and deposing the Jewish high priest. Claudius Cæsar, the emperor, had conceded the privilege of naming the high priest to Agrippa II. This prince had nominated Ananias. The deposed high priest of A.D. 37 was however doubtless one of the members of the Sanhedrim council.

'The estate of the elders' more likely is a term used for the Sanhedrim. There were many, probably, in that venerable body who remembered well the young Pharisee, 'the zealot Saul,' and the brilliant promise he gave in old days of becoming one of the foremost men in the Pharisee party.

From whom also I received letters unto the brethren. That is, to the chiefs of the Syrian synagogues resident in Damascus and elsewhere. He uses the term 'brethren' to show how, now as then, he regarded his fellow-countrymen the Jews as 'his brethren,' and how he looked on their interests as his. It is also noticeable that the term 'brethren' was used by the Jews first, and that, like so much else that belonged to the synagogue and its life, the expression passed to the Christians, and became among the members of the Church of Jesus of Nazareth, indeed, a household word. Paul was armed on that occasion with letters from the Sanhedrim, from whose commands and decisions in ecclesiastical affairs there was no appeal.

For to be punished. By imprisonment, scourging, and, as in the case of Stephen, by a cruel death.

Ver. 6. And it came to pass. [On the various incidents in the narrative of the miraculous conversion of Paul, see notes on chap. ix. 3–19. Any additional facts mentioned in this narration of the same events by St. Paul will be noticed here.]

About noon. This 'note of time' does not appear in the former account. A *light* which could compel attention at such an hour in the full glare of an eastern noon, must be regarded at once as something out of the ordinary course of nature. This mention of the exact time when the Glorious Vision appeared was evidently a *personal* recollection of the event.

Ver. 7. Saul, Saul. *Here*, and again in Paul's own account before Agrippa and Bernice at Cæsarea, the language 'Hebrew' is specially noticed (chap. xxvi. 14); and also in the narrative of chap. ix, the Aramaic (Hebrew) form of Saul, 'Saoul,' is found. The voice from heaven had so imprinted itself on the memory of Paul that he reproduces the call to him as he first heard it.

Ver. 8. I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest. More literally, 'Jesus the Nazarene.' This title of the Lord is peculiar to this account of the conversion. It seems probable that the followers of the Crucified, whom Paul was proceeding to Damascus to persecute, were called 'Nazarenes,' and the inquisitor was arrested in his work by One from heaven calling Himself 'The Nazarene.'

Ver. 9. And they that were with me saw indeed the light, and were afraid; but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me. Much has been said as to the seeming discrepancy between the statement here that Paul's companions 'heard not the voice of Him that spoke to me,' and the words in the narrative, chap. ix. 7, 'hearing a voice.' Dr. J. A. Alexander well explains this apparent difference: 'There is a distinction between hearing a voice speak and hearing what it says, as nothing is more common in our public bodies than the complaint that the speaker is not heard, *i.e.* that his words are not distinguished, though his voice may be audible and even loud. It might be said with equal truth, that Paul's companions heard the voice, *i.e.* knew that it was speaking, and that they did not hear it, *i.e.* did not know what it said.' See St. John's Gospel,

xii. 29, where a similar confusion seems to have occurred in the listeners' minds. Here as there, the Divine Voice to the ordinary bystander was a voice, but not one uttering articulate words.

(On the identity of the 'light from heaven,' which shone round about the company of Saul, with the Shekinah or visible glory, which on so many occasions had been seen by Israel, see note on chap. ix. 3, where the question is discussed at length.)

Ver. 11. **And when I could not see for the glory of that light.** We have here another *personal* memory of the strange eventful scene. In the narrative of chap. ix., we are simply told Saul was blinded; but as we should expect from one who had not only been present at the scene, but had been the chief actor in it, Paul gives us here the reason for that blindness. His eyes were dazzled by the blinding glory of that Light which was 'above the brightness of the sun.'

Ver. 12. **And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt there.** In the account of the conversion of chap. ix. 10, this Ananias is merely mentioned as 'a disciple,' a follower of Jesus of Nazareth; here, however, we have a detailed description of the man who was sent to the blinded Saul after the heavenly vision. It seems not improbable that, although a believer in the Crucified, he was a well-known and respected Jew of Damascus,—one, in fact, blameless in all the ordinances of the law in the Syrian capital, as was James the Lord's brother in Jerusalem. Such a one as Paul describes, even though he were not well known to the Jerusalem Jews (which at least seems probable), yet seeing he was a devout man according to the law, and well reported of in his own city, would surely not have visited and received into friendship a blasphemer and an enemy of the law—would never, save on *very weighty* evidence, have accepted Saul the persecutor as a brother-disciple.

Ver. 13. **And the same hour I looked up upon him.** That is to say, Ananias stood before the stricken Saul, and spoke as he was commanded the healing words of power; then Saul turned his heavy blinded eyes in the direction of the voice which spoke to him, and the sight came back, and 'he looked upon Ananias.' One commentator thus paraphrases: 'I looked up with recovered sight upon him.'

Ver. 14. **The God of our fathers hath chosen thee.** Another appeal to Jewish thought. Paul here reproduces what 'the young man whose name was Saul,' heard from the lips of the first martyr Stephen twenty-five years before, when pleading before the Sanhedrim. The whole sentence of Stephen, which was probably reproduced in its entirety by Paul (Luke no doubt abbreviates it), ran thus: 'The God of our fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.'

**And see that Just One.** We are here distinctly told by Ananias what hardly appears from Luke's account of the vision, or from either of Paul's own recitals, *how in the blinding glory Paul gazed on the Divine form of Jesus Christ.* Was it not to this appearance of 'the Risen One' that he refers when he writes, 'Am I not an apostle? . . . have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord?' (1 Cor. ix. 1); and 'Last of all He was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time' (1 Cor. xv. 8).

'That Just One,' another reminiscence of Stephen's defence before the Sanhedrim. The martyr had spoken of 'the coming of the Just One.' The name 'The Just One,' does not appear to have been one of the titles of the expected Messiah, but may have been suggested by Isa. xi. 4, 5. It seems to have been accepted by the Church of Jerusalem; and in 1 John ii. 1, and perhaps in Jas. v. 6, we find examples of its application. The memorable use of this name by Pilate's wife (Matt. xxvii. 19) may have helped to give prominence to it. He who had been condemned as a malefactor was emphatically, above all the sons of men, the 'Righteous,' the 'Just One.'

Ver. 15. **Thou shalt be his witness unto all men.**

In Luke's account of Acts ix. 15, the 'Gentiles' are especially mentioned by name in the colloquy between Ananias and the Lord, who spoke to him in a vision: 'He is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear My name before the Gentiles,' etc. Here speaking to the angry and jealous Jewish crowd, the expression 'the Gentiles' is omitted altogether, and Paul's broader mission is expressed by the words, 'Thou shalt be His witness to all men.'

Ver. 16. **And be baptized.** The verb in the original Greek is of the *middle*, not of the passive voice, as the English translation would seem to imply. The more accurate rendering is, 'have thyself baptized.' The rite in the case of persons arrived at years of discretion was preceded by 'repentance' (see Acts ii. 38). In St. Paul's mind it was no mere formal or ceremonial rite (comp. his words in Titus iii. 5).

**Calling on the name of the Lord.** The reading of the older mss. here, which we are now able to restore, is an important addition to our proofs, gathered from the inspired writings of the New Testament, of the belief in the early Church in the divinity of Christ. We should read, 'calling on His name,' that is, on that 'Just One,' of whom mention has been made before, ver. 14, and immediately after, vers. 18-21, or, in other words, on Jesus Christ. We see, therefore, that the Church of the first days directly invoked our Lord and Redeemer.

Ver. 17. **And it came to pass, that, when I was come again to Jerusalem.** We know that *after* his conversion and meeting with Ananias, he did not return to Jerusalem, but after a short interval went into Arabia (Gal. i. 17),—a period spent probably for the most part in preparation for his great work. Subsequently, when he went up to the Holy City, in the temple there, he received, while in a trance, the positive direction which determined him to devote himself to preaching the cross of Christ afar off among the isles of the Gentiles.

Paul dwells especially on the fact of this second voice of the Divine Wisdom, ordering him to devote his life's work to the Gentiles, coming to him when praying in the *temple of Jerusalem.* He would show the people who charged him with being a traitor to the chosen race, that his becoming a Christian had neither made him forget Jerusalem nor the glorious House on Mount Zion.

**I was in a trance, or ecstasy.** This apparently was no uncommon state of mind and body for those persons who were chosen to make known in a special way the will of God. For good instances of this miraculously suspended action of the normal working of the senses, see Num. xxiv. 4, the vision of Balaam: 'He hath said, which *heard* the

words of God, which saw the vision of the Almighty, *falling into a trance*, but having *his eyes open*; and 2 Cor. xii. 3, the vision of Paul, where he speaks of himself as, Whether in the body, or out of the body, he could not tell: and that then he was caught up into Paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it was not lawful for a man to utter. See, too, among other places, for the vision of John on the Lord's day, Rev. i. 10. There is no probability that this vision in the temple was identical with the one above referred to in 2 Cor. xii. 3, where a vision of heaven was vouchsafed to him. Here a direct and positive command was given him. St. Paul had many similar revelations in the course of his life.

Ver. 18. **Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem:** for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me. 'They' included both the Jews still strangers to the new covenant, and also the Jewish Christians of the Holy City. By the former he was hated as an apostate; by the latter he was viewed probably as a spy, and as no real Christian.

Ver. 19. **And I said, Lord, they know that I imprisoned and beat in every synagogue them that believed on thee.** Paul, in recalling the very words of the prayer he uttered during his ecstasy, wishes to show his enemies charging him with disloyalty to the people, the law, and the temple, that his apostleship among the Gentiles was totally unsought by him,—nay, that it was positively forced on him by the will of the Most High. He tells them even how he pleaded with God to let him work in Jerusalem among his own people; how he urged that it was naturally to be expected that the members of his own party, the rigid Pharisee Jerusalem Jews, would be likely to listen to him and his arguments, because they could not possibly be more bitter against the followers of the Crucified than he had been. 'Did they not know how he had persecuted and beaten in every synagogue them that called on the hated name of Jesus?' These Pharisees would surely feel that no light or trivial circumstances could have made him, the bitter foe, join a sect of which he

was the notorious persecutor. It has been also suggested, as a reason for his earnest prayer to God in the temple, that he hoped by a lengthened work in Jerusalem in some way to make amends for his former cruel injuries done in that city.

Ver. 20. **And when the blood of thy martyr Stephen was being shed, I also was standing by, and consenting unto his death.** It is hardly likely that the sense in which we understand the word 'martyr,' viz. 'one who dies for his religion,' belonged as yet to the Greek word *μάρτυρ* or *μάρτυς*. It would therefore be more strictly accurate to render here, 'the blood of thy witness Stephen.' But there is little doubt that, very early indeed in the Christian story, the, to us, well-known sense of the beautiful word martyr became

attached to it. Probably the transition from the general sense of 'witness' to the specific meaning of 'martyr' is traceable to its use in such passages as this and Rev. ii. 13, xi. 3, xvii. 6: 'Antipas, my faithful martyr:' 'And I will give power unto my two witnesses' (better, martyrs); 'And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus:' it must be borne in mind that the Revelation was written many years (possibly thirty years) after the compilation of these 'Acts.' Thus the word before the close of the first century had begun to acquire the special Christian sense which in the



Castle of Antonia.

second was so well known. Eusebius tells us, for instance (*H. E.* v. 2), how the martyrs of Lyons (second century) positively refused the title 'martyrs,' considering it appropriate only to Christ: 'If any of us, either by letter or conversation, called them martyrs, they gravely reprov'd us, for they gladly gave up the title of martyr to Christ—the true and faithful Martyr, the first begotten of the dead, the Prince of Divine life.' 'The transition from the first sense (witness) to the second sense (martyr) may be easily accounted for. Many, who had only seen with the eye of faith, suffered persecution and death as a proof of their sincerity. For such constancy the Greek had no adequate term. It was necessary for the Christians to provide one. None was more appropriate than *μάρτυρ*, seeing

what had been the fate of those whom Christ had appointed His *witnesses* (chap. i. 8). They almost all suffered; hence, *to witness* became a synonym for *to suffer*, while the witnessing was in itself a kind of suffering' (Humphry).

Ver. 21. And he said unto me, Depart: for I will send thee far hence unto the Gentiles. He thus traces step by step, very briefly but clearly, how he was led by the directly expressed will of God to adopt the cause which he once persecuted; how he was shown that his life's work lay not with his own people, but with those races and nations who lay without the narrow pale of Israel. 'The object of Paul in relating this vision appears to have been to show that his own inclination and prayer had been, *that he might preach the gospel to his own people*; but that it was by the imperative command of the Lord Himself that he went to the Gentiles' (Dean Alford).

Ver. 22. And they gave him audience unto this word, and then lifted up their voices, and said, Away with such a fellow from the earth; for it is not fit that he should live. Literally, 'they continued to listen to him until,' etc. 'This word' does not refer to the expression 'the Gentiles,' but to the whole of the last part of Paul's discourse, in which he explained that his mission to and his work among the Gentile nations were in accordance with a Divine command. This, to the fanatic Jewish mind, was indeed a startling statement, and, if true, would at once remove all reason for their jealousy of the foreigner. But could it be true that the long-expected Messiah—the peculiar glory of the chosen race—could, in their own proud House in Jerusalem, speak to this man from His glory-throne in heaven, and command him to leave his own city and people, and to devote himself solely to the uncircumcised Gentiles? Was not such an assertion of itself rank blasphemy? Could King Messiah send one—once belonging to their own strictest sect of Pharisees—to these uncovenanted Heathen to tell them that the Messiah, the Redeemer of Israel, was equally their Messiah and Redeemer? One who could say such things was surely unworthy to live. 'The Gentile people of the earth cannot be said really to live,' was one of the maxims of the children of Israel; and were these degraded races to be told they stood as regards eternity on an equal footing with the favoured descendant of Abraham?

Ver. 23. And as they cried out, and cast off their clothes, and threw dust into the air. The cries were exclamations and ejaculations of rage and indignation, probably for the most part inarticulate. The throwing off their clothes was not, as some have supposed, a preparation for the stoning of the blasphemer, as in the case of the martyr Stephen, where we read of the clothes of those sharing in the deed of blood being taken off and laid at the feet of a young man whose name was Saul. There could have been no idea of stoning now in the case of Paul, who was in the custody of the Roman authority. The tearing off the garments on the present occasion was simply, as was the act of throwing dust into the air, an oriental way of giving some outward expression of their uncontrollable rage. These acts, which proclaimed the bitter indignation of the brethren and fathers who were standing near enough to hear Paul's words, were well calculated to inflame the populace who were crowding doubtless into the temple area.

*Paul, on being condemned to be scourged, appeals as a Roman Citizen—The Roman Commander summons the Sanhedrim, 24-30.*

Ver. 24. The chief captain commanded him to be brought into the castle, and bade that he should be examined by scourging; that he might know wherefore they cried so against him. Claudius Lysias, the Roman officer, of course had understood but little of the Hebrew address just delivered by Paul; but when he saw that the people were moved to frenzy by Paul's words, he began to suspect that there was something more than ordinarily dangerous in the apparently insignificant prisoner, whose presence and words could so painfully excite the Jerusalem people. In those stormy and turbulent days which immediately preceded the final outbreak of the Jews, every Roman official in authority felt the danger and responsibility of his position; so at once he determined to get to the bottom of this mysterious matter, and ordered the prisoner to be tortured in the cruel way then common—with the terrible scourge. This scourging was a very usual torture among the Romans in the case of criminals who had to be examined. The punishment was carried out by lictors, and was usually inflicted by rods. 'Judicial torture for the purpose of eliciting a confession has acquired a euphemistic name, the application of the rack, etc., being known in history as putting men to the question.' It is not unlikely that, besides wishing himself to get at the truth of the matter, the Roman, in ordering Paul to be subjected to this severe and disgraceful punishment, like Pilate in the case of the Lord, wished to please the Jews, and so win himself a cheap popularity.

Ver. 25. And as they bound him with thongs. This *may* be the rendering of the Greek words, but it seems better to translate, 'And as they stretched him out for the scourge;' that is, the apostle was bound to a post or pillar in order to be exposed to the blows of the scourge, and in a suitable position to receive the torture.

Paul said to the centurion that stood by, Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned? Once before at Philippi had Paul saved himself from the dread infliction by the same plea (see notes on chap. xvi. 37, 38); now again the execution of the sentence was at once delayed, and the officer who was in charge of the prisoner at once reported to his commander the words of the sufferer. It was a grave crime, as Claudius Lysias well knew, to scourge a Roman citizen; so at once he stayed the proceedings pending further inquiries, which he conducted in person. The claim of Roman citizenship was instantly allowed. There was no fear of imposture in such a case: the assertion, if false, was punishable with death. 'Claudius prohibited strangers from assuming Roman names, especially those which belonged to families. Those who falsely pretended to the freedom of Rome he beheaded on the Esquiline' (Suetonius). There is no doubt Paul had papers and abundant references in the city by which he was ready to have made good his claim to the citizenship.

Ver. 27. Art thou a Roman? The haughty officer, proud of his nationality, could scarcely believe that the poor accused and probably insignificant-looking Jew before him was a citizen



of Rome. The pronoun is strangely emphatic: 'Thou—art thou a Roman?'

Ver. 28. And the chief captain answered, With a great sum obtained I this freedom. More literally, and at the same time more forcibly, 'obtained I this citizenship;' the word, as Plumptre well remarks, expressing not the transition from *bondage to freedom*, but from *the position of an alien to that of a citizen*. The chief captain was no doubt an alien by birth, and by the payment of a heavy bribe had obtained the rights of a citizen of Rome. The power of granting this privilege now rested solely with the reigning emperor as holding the office of Censor.

It was by no means uncommon for persons of wealth and position to purchase this 'citizenship.' It appears that many of the Asian Jews had thus acquired the right to style themselves citizens of Rome.

Under the first Cæsars the freedom of Rome was obtained with great difficulty, and cost a large sum of money; but in the latter days of Claudius these prized rights were freely sold by his wicked favourite Messalina.

But I was free-born. It has been asked how Paul obtained this 'freedom;' for Tarsus, the city of his birth, although possessing many great and important privileges, was a metropolis and a free city, and did not confer the rights of the Roman citizenship upon its citizens. It was neither a 'Colonia' nor a 'Municipium.' It must have been from his father or from some ancestor that he inherited it, either as a reward for service done to Rome or else by purchase.

Ver. 29. Then straightway they departed from him which should have examined him. That is to say, those soldiers who with the centurion were about to carry the sentence of scourging into execution. It is noticeable how the word rendered 'should have examined' had acquired the sense of 'examining by torture.'

The chief captain also was afraid, after he knew that he was a Roman, and because he had bound him. The old magical power of the words, *Civis Romanus sum*, 'I am a Roman citizen,' was by no means gone when Paul spoke to the soldiers of the tower of Antonia. Although the stern rules which once forbade torture to be applied to any citizen of Rome had been violated even so early as the time of Tiberius, when torture was endured by citizens of the highest rank, still we imagine for a long while provincial officials would stand in awe of the old name which once was so venerated and still bore with it many precious privileges. On this occa-

sion his claim to the citizenship saved him from the lictor's rods, though he still remained 'bound;' for ver. 30 tells us he was not 'loosed from his bands' until the morrow, when he was brought before the Sanhedrim. There is no doubt but that the statement of ver. 29, which states how 'the chief captain was afraid' because he had bound a Roman, refers not to the fact simply of his being fettered, but to his having been fastened to the pillar to receive the blows of the rods.

Ver. 30. On the morrow, when he would have known the certainty whereof he was accused of the Jews, he loosed him from his bonds. In spite of his being convinced that Paul was a Roman, the captain of the thousand garrisoning Jerusalem was uneasy respecting his prisoner; he could not but believe him guilty of some very grave offence, seeing that so many persons, and among them not a few responsible men, seemed to consider him deserving of death. Treason and rebellion against the Empire filled the very air then of Judæa; who then was this malefactor?

Commanded the chief priests and all their council to appear, and brought Paul down, and set him before them. The procurator or governor was evidently not in the city. (The procuratorship was the office once held by Pontius Pilate.) In his absence the chief authority in Jerusalem was held by the commanding officer in Antonia. Claudius Lysias thus had the power in extraordinary instances of summoning the Sanhedrim together. This power, after the preceding day's tumult, he thought fit to exercise. Hence the meeting of the supreme Jewish council. Now Jewish tradition tells us that some twenty-six years before this time, the Sanhedrim had ceased to hold their meetings in their hall called Gazith which was in the temple. Probably they declined to sit in the temple when the power over life and death was taken from them by the Roman government. After ceasing to sit in 'Gazith,' they adopted as their council chamber a room in the city, near the bridge leading across the ravine from the western cloister of the temple. It is not unlikely that this removal from the temple to the city was originally owing to an 'authoritative' suggestion of the Roman power; for within that part of the temple area where the hall 'Gazith' was situated, the Romans as Gentiles had no access. As on the present occasion, when Lysias brought in Paul, the representatives of Rome no doubt were often in the habit of insisting on being present at the deliberations of the supreme Jewish council.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

*Paul's Defence before the Sanhedrim—He is sent by the Romans a State Prisoner to Cæsarea.*

1 AND Paul, <sup>a</sup>earnestly beholding <sup>b</sup>the council, said, Men <sup>a</sup>See Lu. iv. 20.  
and <sup>c</sup>brethren, I have <sup>d</sup>lived <sup>e</sup>in all good conscience <sup>b</sup>See ch. xxii. 30.  
2 before God until this day. And the high priest <sup>c</sup>Ananias <sup>c</sup>Phil. i. 27 (Gk.). 50

Phil. iii. 20 (Gk.).  
Heb. xiii. 18. Cp. Job xxvii. 5, 6; 1 Cor. iv. 4.

<sup>d</sup>So ch. xxiv. 16; Rom. xiii. 5; 2 Cor. i. 12, iv. 2; 1 Tim. i. 5, iii. 9; 2 Tim. i. 3;  
<sup>e</sup>Ch. xxiv. 1.

<sup>1</sup> omit 'Men and.'

- commanded them that stood by him to <sup>f</sup>smite him on the <sup>f</sup>See 1 Kings  
3 mouth. Then said Paul unto him, God shall smite thee, *thou* xxii. 24.
- <sup>e</sup>whited wall: for sittest thou to judge me after the law, and <sup>e</sup>Mat. xxiii.  
4 commandest me to be smitten <sup>e</sup>contrary to the law? And 27.  
<sup>f</sup>they that stood by said, Revilest thou God's high priest? <sup>f</sup>Deut. xxv. 1,  
<sup>f</sup>So Jo. vii. 51.  
5 Then said Paul, <sup>f</sup>I wist not, brethren, that he was the high <sup>f</sup>So Jo. xviii.  
priest: for it is written, <sup>f</sup>Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler 22.  
6 of thy people. But when Paul perceived that the one part <sup>f</sup>Cp. ch. xxiv.  
were <sup>m</sup>Sadducees, and the other Pharisees, he cried out in <sup>b</sup>the 17.  
council, Men *and*<sup>1</sup> brethren, <sup>m</sup>I am a Pharisee, the son of a <sup>f</sup>Cited from  
Pharisee: <sup>o</sup>of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am <sup>f</sup>Ex. xxii. 28,  
7 called in question. And when he had so said, there arose a <sup>f</sup>which see.  
dissension between the Pharisees and the <sup>m</sup>Sadducees: and the <sup>m</sup>See Mat.  
8 multitude was divided. For the <sup>m</sup>Sadducees <sup>f</sup>say that there <sup>f</sup>xxii. 23;  
is no resurrection, neither angel nor spirit: but the Pharisees <sup>f</sup>Mk. xii. 18;  
9 confess both. And there arose a great cry: and the scribes <sup>f</sup>Lu. xx. 27.  
*that were* of the Pharisees' part arose, and strove, saying, <sup>f</sup>Cp. 1 Cor.  
*'We* find no evil in this man: but <sup>r</sup>if a spirit or an angel hath <sup>f</sup>xv. 12.  
10 spoken to him, <sup>f</sup>let us not fight against God.<sup>4</sup> And when <sup>f</sup>See ver. 29.  
there arose a great dissension, the chief captain, fearing lest <sup>f</sup>Ch. xxii. 7,  
Paul should have been pulled in pieces <sup>b</sup>of them, commanded <sup>f</sup>17, 18.  
<sup>f</sup>the soldiers to <sup>m</sup>go down, and to take him by force from <sup>f</sup>See ch. v. 39.  
among them, and to bring *him* into <sup>v</sup>the castle. <sup>f</sup>Ver. 27  
(Gk.). See  
11 And <sup>m</sup>the night following the Lord <sup>x</sup>stood by him, and said, <sup>f</sup>Lu. xxiii. 11.  
Be of good cheer, Paul: <sup>b</sup>for <sup>f</sup>as thou hast <sup>f</sup>testified of me in <sup>f</sup>Ver. 15;  
12 Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also <sup>a</sup>at Rome. And <sup>f</sup>ch. xxi. 35,  
when it was day, <sup>b</sup>certain of the Jews' banded together, and <sup>f</sup>xxii. 30.  
bound themselves under a curse, saying that *they* would neither <sup>f</sup>Vers. 16, 32.  
13 eat nor drink till they had killed Paul. And they were more <sup>f</sup>See ch. xxi.  
14 *than* forty which had made this conspiracy. And they came to <sup>f</sup>34.  
the chief priests and elders, and said, We have bound ourselves <sup>f</sup>So ch. xviii.  
under a great curse, that *we* will eat <sup>b</sup>nothing until we have <sup>f</sup>9, xxvii. 23,  
15 slain Paul. Now therefore ye with <sup>c</sup>the council <sup>d</sup>signify to the <sup>f</sup>24. Cp.  
chief captain that he <sup>c</sup>bring him down unto you to-morrow,<sup>9</sup> as <sup>f</sup>ch. xxii. 14.  
though ye would inquire something more <sup>f</sup>perfectly concerning <sup>f</sup>1 Sam. iii. 10.  
him: and we, or ever he come near, are ready to kill him. <sup>f</sup>So 2 Tim. iv.  
16 And when Paul's sister's son heard of *their* lying in wait, he <sup>f</sup>17.  
17 went and entered into <sup>c</sup>the castle, and told Paul. Then Paul <sup>f</sup>Ch. xxii. 15.  
<sup>f</sup>See Lu. xvi.  
<sup>a</sup>See ch. xix.  
<sup>b</sup>Vers. 21, 30.  
<sup>c</sup>So ch. xxv. 3.  
<sup>d</sup>See ch. ix. 24.  
<sup>e</sup>See ch. xxii.  
<sup>f</sup>Ver. 22; ch.  
xxiv. 1, xxv.  
2, 15 in Gk.  
<sup>f</sup>See ver. 10.  
<sup>f</sup>Ver. 20;  
ch. xviii. 25  
(Gk.), 26,  
xxiv. 22.  
<sup>f</sup>Ver. 10.

<sup>1</sup> The older authorities read, 'the son of Pharisees.'

<sup>2</sup> The readings here are various, some of the very ancient authorities omitting the word 'the' before 'scribes,' others insert 'some;' the best attested reading seems to be, 'and some of the scribes of the Pharisees' division,' etc.

<sup>4</sup> The most ancient authorities here omit the words, 'Let us not fight against God.'

<sup>5</sup> better, 'torn asunder by them.'

<sup>6</sup> The older authorities omit 'Paul.'

<sup>7</sup> The older authorities here, instead of 'certain of the Jews,' read 'the Jews.'

<sup>8</sup> literally, 'that we will taste nothing,' etc.

<sup>9</sup> The older authorities omit 'to-morrow.'



- called one of the centurions unto *him*, and said, Bring this young man unto the chief captain : for he hath a certain *thing*<sup>10</sup> to tell him. So he took him, and brought *him* to the chief captain, and said, Paul the prisoner called me unto *him*, and prayed *me* to bring this young man unto thee, who hath something to say unto thee. Then the chief captain took him by the hand, and went *with him* aside privately, and asked *him*, What is that thou hast to tell me? And he said, <sup>a</sup>The Jews <sup>b</sup>have agreed to desire thee that thou wouldest bring down Paul to-morrow into <sup>c</sup>the council, <sup>d</sup>as though they would inquire <sup>e</sup>some-  
 21 somewhat of him more <sup>f</sup>perfectly. But do not thou yield unto them : for there <sup>g</sup>lie in wait for him of them more *than* forty men, which have bound themselves <sup>h</sup>with an oath, that *they* will neither eat nor drink till they have killed him : and now  
 22 are they ready, looking for a promise from thee. So the chief captain then let the young man depart, and charged *him*, <sup>i</sup>See <sup>j</sup>thou tell no *man* that thou hast <sup>k</sup>showed these *things* to me.  
 23 And he called unto *him* two centurions, saying, Make ready two hundred soldiers to go to <sup>l</sup>Cæsarea,<sup>11</sup> and horsemen three-score *and* ten, and spearmen two hundred, at the third hour of  
 24 the night ; And provide *them* beasts,<sup>12</sup> that they may set Paul  
 25 on, and bring *him* safe unto Felix <sup>m</sup>the governor. And he wrote a letter after this manner :  
 26 Claudius Lysias unto the <sup>n</sup>most excellent <sup>o</sup>governor Felix <sup>p</sup>See <sup>q</sup>Lu. i. 3.  
 27 <sup>r</sup>*sendeth*<sup>14</sup> greeting. <sup>s</sup>This man was taken of the Jews, and should have been killed of them : then came I with <sup>t</sup>an army,<sup>15</sup> and rescued him, <sup>u</sup>having understood that he was a Roman.  
 28 And <sup>v</sup>when I would have known the cause wherefore they <sup>w</sup>accused him, I <sup>x</sup>brought him forth<sup>16</sup> into their <sup>y</sup>council :  
 29 Whom I perceived<sup>17</sup> to be <sup>z</sup>accused <sup>aa</sup>of questions of their law, but to have nothing laid to his charge <sup>ab</sup>worthy of death or of  
 30 bonds. And <sup>ac</sup>when it was told me how that the Jews<sup>18</sup> <sup>ad</sup>laid wait for the man, I sent straightway to thee, and <sup>ae</sup>gave commandment to *his* accusers also to say before thee what *they* had against him. <sup>af</sup>Farewell.<sup>19</sup>  
 31 Then the soldiers, as it was commanded them, took Paul, and  
 32 brought *him* by night to Antipatris. On the morrow they left <sup>ag</sup>the horsemen to go with him, and returned to <sup>ah</sup>the castle :

<sup>10</sup> better, 'he had somewhat to tell him.'

<sup>11</sup> The older authorities read here the singular instead of the plural; render then, 'as though thou wouldest inquire,' etc., not 'as though they would inquire.'

<sup>12</sup> literally, 'as far as Cæsarea.'

<sup>13</sup> Render here, 'and he ordered them that they should provide beasts.'

<sup>14</sup> omit 'sendeth.'

<sup>15</sup> better rendered, 'with the guard.'

<sup>16</sup> literally, 'I conducted him down.'

<sup>17</sup> literally, 'whom I found.'

<sup>18</sup> The older authorities here omit the words 'the Jews;' render then, 'that there would be a conspiracy against the man.'

<sup>19</sup> Some, though by no means all the more ancient authorities, omit 'Farewell.'

<sup>a</sup> Vers. 14, 15.

<sup>i</sup> See ch. xxii. 30.

<sup>h</sup> Lu. xi. 54.

<sup>l</sup> Ver. 12 (Gk.).

<sup>m</sup> Construction as ch. i. 4. xvii. 3. See Ex. xviii. 4. Cp. ver. 24 (Gk.).

<sup>n</sup> Ver. 32. See ch. viii. 40.

<sup>o</sup> Vers. 26, 33. 34. See Mat. xxvii. 2.

<sup>p</sup> See Lu. i. 3.

<sup>q</sup> See ch. xv.

<sup>r</sup> Cp. ch. xxi.

<sup>s</sup> 32, 33.

<sup>t</sup> xxiv. 7.

<sup>u</sup> Gk. as ver.

<sup>v</sup> 10.

<sup>w</sup> Cp. ch. xxii.

<sup>x</sup> 25-29.

<sup>y</sup> Ch. xxii. 30.

<sup>z</sup> See ch. xix.

<sup>aa</sup> 38.

<sup>ab</sup> Gk. as ch.

<sup>ac</sup> xxii. 30.

<sup>ad</sup> See ch. xxii.

<sup>ae</sup> 30.

<sup>af</sup> So ch. xviii.

<sup>ag</sup> 15, xxv. 19.

<sup>ah</sup> Ch. xxvi. 31.

<sup>ai</sup> So ch. xxv.

<sup>aj</sup> 25. Cp.

<sup>ak</sup> ver. 9.

<sup>al</sup> Ver. 20.

<sup>am</sup> See ch. ix. 24.

<sup>an</sup> Ver. 35;

<sup>ao</sup> ch. xxiv. 8.

<sup>ap</sup> See ch. xv.

<sup>aq</sup> 20.

<sup>ar</sup> Ver. 23.

<sup>as</sup> Vers. 10, 17.

- 33 Who, when they came to \* Cæsarea, and delivered the epistle<sup>20</sup>  
 34 to ° the governor, presented Paul also before him. And when  
 ° the governor had read *the letter*, he asked of what ° province  
 he was: ° and when he understood that *he was* of ° Cilicia;  
 35 ' I will hear thee, said he, ° when thine accusers are also come. °  
 And he commanded him to be kept in ' Herod's judgment  
 hall.<sup>21</sup>

Ch. xxv. 1.  
 Ch. xxi. 39.  
 Ch. xxiv. 1.  
 10-22.  
 Ver. 30.  
 Cp. ch. xxv.  
 16.  
 Mat. ii. 1, or  
 ch. xii. 19?

<sup>20</sup> *better rendered*, 'the letter.'

<sup>21</sup> *more accurately*, 'in Herod's prætorium' or 'palace.'

*St. Paul brought before the Sanhedrim by the Roman Officials in Jerusalem—He defends himself before the Great Council, 1-10.*

Ver. 1. And Paul, earnestly beholding the council. The Greek word *ἀντιβλέπων*, rendered 'earnestly beholding,' is used by the apostle on more than one solemn occasion, and describes the strained earnest gaze with which he endeavours to make up for that weakness of sight of which mention has already been made. It has also been suggested as more than probable that this dimness of vision, accompanied no doubt often with grievous pain, was occasioned by the glory of the Damascus vision, and most likely was the celebrated 'thorn in the flesh' alluded to in such touching language in 2 Cor. xii. 7-9. Still, though the eyesight was dim, we do not, as will be seen, accept the theory that he could not discern whether the one speaking to him was the high priest. The very word here used seems to imply the contrary. Once more, after all those many years, Paul was present at a meeting of that august assembly of which he once was *most likely* a member, *certainly* was a confidential and trusted official. With strained fixed gaze he looked round on that once familiar scene, on *some* old and once-loved faces, all now looking on him with the deepest hate and aversion. He could not fail to distinguish the high priest, seeing he noticed the several party groups (ver. 6) into which the Sanhedrim was divided.

Said, Men and brethren. Rendered simply, 'said, Brethren.' This time he omits the words 'and fathers,' with which he prefaced his address on the steps of 'Antonia,' to the multitude crowding in the temple area below him. Then it was a more impassioned address, and he appealed especially to the elders present; *now*, standing formally arraigned before the Sanhedrim, he remembers his ancient position among them,—a position he is conscious he has surely, by his long devotion to his Master, never forfeited. So he begins as an equal speaking to equals; a former Sanhedrist to his ancient colleagues: 'Brothers!'

I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day. Well paraphrased by 'I have lived as a true and loyal Jew, for the service and glory of God, from my youth up until now.' Paul more than once refers in a similar way to 'conscience.' So in 2 Tim. i. 3, he says he had all his life served God with a pure conscience; and again, in 1 Tim. i. 5, he writes how a good conscience was the end of the commandment. See, too, Rom. ii. 15. Paul teaches us that a man

must never act against the dictates of his conscience, though, however, he plainly demonstrates from his own early experience that conscience is by no means an infallible guide; *it requires light from on high*. He shows us again, by his own example, from what 'good conscience before God' proceeds: 1. From true faith in Christ, by which the remission of sins is obtained. 2. From the assurance of Divine grace. 3. From the faithful performance of the duties of our calling.

The words 'until this day' cover *all* his preceding life. He felt he had acted conscientiously *before* the Damascus vision, according to the dim light he then possessed; and *after* that solemn meeting with the Lord Jesus by the way, he had changed his life and conversation, according to the dictates of his conscience, illuminated by the ever presence of the Holy Spirit sent by his Master.

Ver. 2. And the high priest Ananias. We can imagine the wrath of the haughty prelate at the first words of the accused. What unheard of presumption that this Paul, a renegade and out-cast, the enemy 'of all that the Sanhedrim held sacred,' should dare to arrogate to himself 'a brotherhood with them.' His former close connection with that august senate only rendered his present strange claim more insupportable; and when the poor prisoner went on to assert that, after all the years of apostasy, Nazarene leader though he had been, he was still a loyal Jew, faithful to the God of his fathers, the anger of the high priest flamed forth, and he bade the officials standing near the accused to smite him on the mouth.

Ananias, who presided over this meeting of the Sanhedrim, the son of Nebedæus, was appointed to this high office by Herod, king of Chalcis, in A.D. 48, some ten years before St. Paul was arraigned before the supreme Jewish council. While Cumanus was procurator of Judæa, Quadratus, president of Syria, arrested and sent Ananias to be tried at Rome, on the complaint of the Samaritans, A.D. 52. Herod Agrippa the younger procured the acquittal of the Jewish party, whom the Samaritans accused of certain acts of violence. Ananias then resumed the high-priesthood. He was superseded by Ismael, the son of Phabi, just before the departure of Felix from Judæa. This change was brought about by Herod Agrippa the younger, A.D. 59. He then held the great office of high priest for about eleven years, an unusually lengthened period in those stormy days of intrigue. After his deposition, he still continued to exercise great influence among his countrymen. He was famous for his violent and

illegal acts. This evil though successful man was assassinated by the Sicarii at last.

**Commanded them that stood by him to smite him on the mouth.** A similar insult was offered to the Lord Jesus when He stood accused before the same council, John xviii. 22. Commentators often quote from Morier's *Second Journey through Persia* to show that this treatment is by no means uncommon in the unchanging East in our own days. 'As soon as the ambassadors came,' writes this traveller, 'he punished the principal offenders by causing them to be beaten before them; and those who had spoken their minds too freely, *he smote upon the mouth with a shoe*;' and in another passage Morier writes thus, "'Call the Ferasches," exclaimed the king, "let them beat the culprits until they die!" The Ferasches appeared, and beat them violently; and when they attempted to say anything in their defence, *they were struck in the mouth*.'

**Ver. 3. Then said Paul unto him, God shall smite thee, thou whited wall.** These strange words, spoken no doubt in hot anger and excitement by the indignant prisoner, must of course be understood not as an imprecation, but as a prophetic denunciation of a future doom. The prophecy was fulfilled to the letter, for in the early days of the Jewish war, we learn from Josephus, that in consequence of a sedition raised by his own son Eleazar, the Sicarii, led by Menahem, the son of Judas of Galilee, entered Jerusalem, and after committing many evil excesses, burned the palace of this Ananias, and having dragged him and his brother Hezekiah from their place of concealment, murdered them both (*Belh. Jud.* ii. 17, 9). The expression 'whited wall,' or hypocrite, was used with a slight variation by the Lord to the Pharisees and scribes (*Matt.* xxiii. 27; *Luke* xi. 44). The simile, after this use by their Master, had most likely become proverbial among the Christians of the first days, and was singularly applicable in the case of this violent and haughty priest, who no doubt presented *externally*, as he sat on his throne of honour in the Sanhedrim, with his grey hair and white priestly garments, girt with the insignia of his lofty office, a venerable and imposing appearance; but *internally*, his heart was full of rage and of deadly hatred, of injustice and tyranny. The Jews, as a rule, painted their sepulchres conspicuously white, that they might not defile themselves by unexpectedly coming in contact with them. Thus the walls of the sepulchre would be white and fair-seeming to the eye, but they would contain within, dead men's bones and a mass of putrefying corruption. This is most probably the thought contained in St. Paul's comparison, 'Thou whited wall;' although it is possible the allusion was simply to a wall roughly and coarsely built of clay, and then neatly and carefully coloured *white* to imitate stone on the outside.

This expression of anger on the part of Paul was no doubt a singular one; and although the hasty wrathful words were allowed by God to take the form, in this case, of a prophecy, they are not to be excused. Paul himself evidently felt he had done wrong by thus giving way to what seems to be a natural expression of fiery indignation. We hear him, after a moment's reflection, recalling them and expressing his sorrow for having uttered them. In this passage again, as so often in these Divine records, we cannot help noticing the strict

accuracy of the compiler of these 'Acts' of the first days; concealing nothing, passing over nothing which belonged to the memories of the first grand days of Christianity, though these memories contained not a few details which could not fail to mar in the eyes of coming generations the characters of those great ones,—men like Peter, and Paul, and Barnabas, whom the Holy Ghost had made choice of to lay the early stories of the Church of Christ on earth.

We dare not blame very hardly this very natural ebullition of anger on the part of the long-suffering apostle, who was thus requited, by an insulting and painful blow, inflicted by the order of the high priest, for his brave patient life of utter self-denial and self-surrender, seeing that the noble Luther (quoted by Lange) thus writes of the transaction: 'If St. Paul in this manner assails the priest who was appointed by the law of Moses, why should I hesitate to assail those painted bishops and monks that come from the pope, without any authority from God or from man.'

But though perhaps we should be slow to blame, we may at least compare the conduct of the servant Paul with the behaviour of the Master Christ, when He stood as a prisoner before these same haughty judges. Jerome felt this, and very hotly asks, 'Where (*here*) is that patience of the Redeemer, who, when He was brought as a lamb to the slaughter, *opened not his mouth*, but gently says to the men that struck Him: "If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why smitest thou Me? . . . ." We do not then detract from the apostle; but we do proclaim the glory of the Lord, who, when He suffered in the flesh, rose grandly above all sense of injury done to the flesh, rose above the weakness of the flesh.'

**For sittest thou to judge me after the law.** As we shall point out further down, there is no ground for supposing that Paul, when he thus spoke in fierce wrath, was for a moment ignorant who it was to whom he addressed his bitter words, 'thou whited wall.' He pointedly here addresses as 'the whited wall' the one presiding over that august and venerable assembly with which he was *once* so intimately acquainted.

**Ver. 4. And they that stood by said, Revilest thou God's high priest?** It was—and St. Paul knew it well—contrary to the law of Moses (see *Ex.* xxii. 28, subsequently quoted by him) to revile one placed in a position of authority, such as the high priest, or any one sitting as president of the Sanhedrim council,—'the father of the house of judgment,' as the Talmud calls him.

**Ver. 5. Then said Paul, I wist not, brethren, that he was the high priest: for it is written, Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people.** What is meant by these words? 'I wist not (*οὐκ ᾔδειν*) that he was the high priest.' Several well-meant but mistaken interpretations have been suggested in order to avoid what seems the only correct conclusion, viz. that Paul on this occasion 'spoke unadvisedly with his lips,'—a fault which the noble-hearted man was himself, as we shall see, swift to acknowledge. Of these, the following are the principal: (a) Paul did not *personally* know the high priest. He had been absent—save on his very few brief visits—for so many years (between twenty and thirty) from Jerusalem, and the high priest was so frequently changed, that he did not know this high priest Ananias by sight. (b) 'I wist not;' in other words,

Paul said: I did not know that it was the president of the Sanhedrim who was addressing me. I heard, indeed, a voice commanding the rough officer to smite me on the mouth; but my dim vision prevented me from distinguishing the speaker. (c) Paul would not acknowledge one who could thus transgress the law, who could forget himself so far as to give such an unjust and cruel command as the order to smite on the mouth a defenceless prisoner pleading for his life before so august a court. This interpretation of the words would then understand them as spoken 'ironically.' (d) The apostle did not consider that Ananias was the lawful high priest. He looked on him only as the puppet set up by Rome, or Rome's agent, the younger Agrippa, and not as the legally constituted head of the sacred Jewish hierarchy. But of these (a), (c), and (d) are quite unsatisfactory, mere baseless suppositions; while (b) is refuted by the fact already referred to in these notes. Paul (ver. 3) speaks expressly to the president 'sitting there to judge him after the law'; so the dimness of his eyesight cannot be pleaded as an excuse. It is better then to concede, as we have done above (see note on ver. 3), that Paul, at once recognising he was wrong, simply and truthfully confesses that when he had uttered the reviling angry words, he had not considered that it was the high priest of Israel whom he was addressing. We might paraphrase Paul's words thus: I spake the angry words without reflection. I thought at that moment of bitter indignation nothing of high priest or president of the supreme council of Israel. Had I reflected, I had never spoken thus; for it is written in the sacred law, which I reverence with as deep a veneration as any of you, *'Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people.'* This quotation is verbatim from the Septuagint Version of Ex. xxii. 28.

Ver. 6. **But when Paul perceived that the one part were Sadducees, and the other Pharisees.** The great council now for many years seems to have been divided roughly into two great parties, the Sadducees and the Pharisees. (See on the position held in Israel at this time by these two sects, Excursus at the end of the chapter.)

He cried out in the council, **Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee and the son of a Pharisee: of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question.** The true reading here is 'the son of Pharisees.' Paul's conduct in this involving the Pharisees and Sadducees present in the Sanhedrim in a violent dispute, has been the theme of much controversy. The very praise lavished on what has been called 'a strategic act' on the part of the apostle, raises doubts in the mind of the seeker after God, whether or no Paul's action here was right and wise. For instance, the celebrated Roman Catholic expositor Cornelius A. Lapide, builds on it the famous maxim, 'The war of heretics is the peace of the Church.' He calls this the only method of maintaining the unity of the Church. Alford's words here are singularly happy: 'Surely no defence of Paul for adopting this course is required, but our admiration is due to his skill and presence of mind. Nor need we hesitate to regard such skill as the fulfilment of the promise, that in such an hour the Spirit of Wisdom should suggest words to the accused, which the accuser should not be able to gainsay. All prospect of a fair trial was hopeless. He well knew, from past

and present experience, that personal odium would bias his judges, and violence prevail over justice; he therefore uses in the cause of truth the maxim so often perverted to the cause of falsehood, *Divide et impera.*'

On considering Paul's words, 'I am a Pharisee,' it must not be forgotten that after all, the great doctrine which distinguished the Pharisees of those days was their belief in the resurrection. It was this which really separated them from their rivals the Sadducees. The Pharisee teachers, it has been truly remarked, had given to this doctrine a prominence which it never had before. Many of their noblest members, even leaders, mainly on this account had been secret disciples of our Lord, such as Nicodemus, Joseph of Arimathea, and possibly the Rabbi Gamaliel. Some seven or eight years before this time we know that already among the members of the Christian Church were many avowed Pharisees (see chap. xv. 5). The apostle really said, to use Plumptre's paraphrase of his words here: 'I am a Pharisee; yes, I am one with you in all that is truest in your creed. I invite you to listen and see whether what I now proclaim to you is not the crown and completion of all your hopes and yearnings. Is not the resurrection of Jesus the one thing needed for a proof of that hope of the resurrection of the dead of which you and your fathers have been witnesses?'

There was a common ground on which Paul with the Christian teachers and the Pharisees met together, and the apostle longed to lead those who had already grasped a part of the truth yet higher into the regions of gospel light. *The hope of the fathers fulfilled by the coming of Jesus the Messiah, and the resurrection of the dead sealed by the resurrection of Christ*, these two themes were the groundwork of all Paul's preaching. We gather from the 'Acts' and the inspired Epistles that the Christianity of the first days was founded on the fact of the resurrection of Christ (see 1 Cor. xv. 15-20, where the apostle presses home this argument with what we may dare to term a sublime temerity). Thus Paul in his words, 'I am a Pharisee . . . of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question,' took his standing on the same platform with his former friends and now jealous and relentless foes the Pharisees. My only crime, he urged with passionate earnestness, is that I preach with a strange success that great doctrine of the resurrection, the maintaining of which at all risks, in an unbelieving and faithless generation, is the reason of existence of the whole Pharisee sect. On that doctrine Paul as a Christian knew how to flash a new strong light, but the 'teaching' itself for which he really suffered was only the teaching of the purest Pharisee school.

Ver. 7. **And when he had so said, there arose a dissension between the Pharisees and the Sadducees.** The effect of Paul's words was to suggest to one of the great parties, the Pharisees, that after all, the chief doctrines taught by this man and his fellow-believers were much more akin to their own school of teaching than were the doctrines of their rivals the Sadducees. It would surely never do, thought the Pharisee leaders, to unite with the Sadducees here, and do to death one who really is helping us and doing our work in opposition to those hateful unbelieving Sadducees.

Ver. 8. For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit; but the Pharisees confess both. The strict accuracy of this description of the author of the 'Acts' is borne witness to by Josephus, who tells us, in his *Wars of the Jews*, that 'the Sadducees reject the permanence or existence of the soul after death, and the rewards and punishments of an invisible world;' and in his *Antiquities*, that 'the Sadducees hold that the souls of men perish with their bodies.' The same Jewish writer speaks, on the other hand, of the Pharisees' opinions in his *Antiquities* in the following terms: 'Souls [of men] have an immortal strength, and are destined to be rewarded or punished in another state according to the life here, as it has been one of virtue or vice.' It has been asked how the alleged unbelief of the Sadducees in angels and spirits can be reconciled with their acknowledgment of the Divine authorship of the Pentateuch, which contains so many accounts of the appearance of angels, which holds so many distinct references to the life of the soul in another state (see, for instance, the words of the Eternal speaking from the burning bush, when He declares Himself to Moses to be the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, though when He thus spoke these patriarchs had been long dead and buried, and we know the Eternal of Hosts was no God of the dead, only of the living; therefore these supposed dead ones must have been, when Moses listened to the voice from the flaming fire, still living, *though not among men*). Plumptre suggests the following able solution of this surface difficulty: 'The great body of the higher priestly class were, we know, mere Sadducees (chap. v. 17); and what on these principles was the meaning of the temple ritual? They were, in fact, carried along by one of the great waves of thought which were then passing over the ancient world, and were Epicureans and Materialists without knowing it. . . . For them the angels of the Pentateuch were not distinct beings, but evanescent manifestations of the Divine glory'—like clouds.

Ver. 9. The scribes that were of the Pharisees part arose and strove. As a rule the 'scribes' belonged to the sect of Pharisees, as that party reverently attended to the Law and the Prophets, and the multitude of traditions and teachings that had grown up round the sacred writings. These comments and interpretations were especially the charge of the 'scribe.' There were, however, some scribes attached to the sceptical Sadducees. They appear here prominently as being men of high culture and learning, and accustomed to argument. They were naturally put forward as the speakers.

We find no evil in this man. The appeal of Paul had found the heart of the Pharisee section in the Sanhedrim. These recognise now that the Christian teacher was not the enemy they should fear: they and Paul had another and a common foe in the sceptic Sadducees.

But if a spirit or an angel hath spoken to him, let us not fight against God. The words 'let us not fight against God' do not occur in the most trustworthy and ancient MSS. They were evidently introduced from the speech of Gamaliel to the Sanhedrim spoken nearly a quarter of a century before (see Acts v. 39), to complete the sentence, which at first sight appears

unfinished. Some have supposed the concluding words were drowned in the tumultuous cries of the Sadducees, and were consequently unheard; but the explanation suggested by Dr. Hackett is the most satisfactory, and probably represents the true cause of the seeming abruptness: 'Undoubtedly a designed aposiopesis. A significant gesture or look toward the Sadducees expressed what was left unsaid: *If a spirit spoke to him or an angel—that is not an impossible thing: the matter then assumes importance.* For other examples of aposiopesis, see Luke xix. 42, xxii. 42.' It is possible there is a special reference here to what Paul had said in his speech on the steps of the tower of Antonia concerning the appearance of Jesus to him on the way to Damascus.

Ver. 10. And when there arose a great dissension, the chief captain, fearing lest Paul should have been pulled in pieces of them, commanded the soldiers to go down. The excitement in the council hall continued to increase. The Sadducees endeavouring to seize him as a blasphemer, the Pharisees laying hold on him to rescue and protect him, the apostle was literally in danger of being torn to pieces. Claudius Lysias, who was present in the assembly, at once intervened and ordered a guard of his soldiers to interpose and bring the accused again into the Roman barracks in Antonia. He felt he was responsible for the safety of one who claimed to be a citizen of Rome.

Ver. 11. And the night following, the Lord stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer, Paul; for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome. Probably the Lord Jesus made this revelation to the apostle in a dream. Paul saw his Master standing by him, and heard His comforting cheering words. It was indeed a most solemn crisis in his eventful life. He had but just escaped death, owing his safety on the two preceding days alone to the intervention of the Roman soldiery. He was on the threshold of a prison whence he knew that, owing to the sleepless cunning of the Jewish hierarchy, there would be no going out till the morning of his execution. He had, besides, good reason for feeling very dispirited with the result of the witness he had borne at Jerusalem.

All these gloomy thoughts no doubt weighed on the wearied apostle's mind as he lay down and tried to sleep that night in the barrack prison-room in Antonia. But the Lord had pity on His harassed servant, and reassured him, telling him that not only would he be preserved in all his present dangers, but that, improbable as it then seemed, he would live to bear his gallant testimony in distant Rome—in Rome where he had so long and so earnestly desired to labour. 'So may one crumb of Divine grace and help be multiplied to feed 5000 wants and anxieties' (Alford). Paul's voice, so said his Master to him, was to be heard in the two capitals of the world—in Jerusalem the metropolis of the religious, and in Rome the metropolis of the civil world. The results of his preaching in each of these centres deserve attention. In Jerusalem, Paul's mission was a complete failure: his words there were spoken to the winds, they were written upon the sand; but when Paul left Jerusalem, the days of the city were numbered. In about ten years from the day when his pleading voice was drowned by the execrations in the temple, and a few hours

later in the Sanhedrim hall, not one stone of the doomed city was left on another. In Rome he helped to build up a flourishing church. His presence had been long looked for in the great metropolis; and when the sovereignty of the world was lost to the imperial city, the once despised religion of Paul and his companions restored to the Rome which had welcomed him and received his message, a new and even grander empire than the proudest of the early Cæsars had ruled over. The words of the Master in the vision were indeed fulfilled—fulfilled, too, in that deeper sense which the solemn word 'to bear witness' was beginning to assume in the familiar language of Christians.

Paul would be preserved to help in laying the foundation stories of the Roman Church; and besides this, the day was not so far distant when the veteran soldier of Christ should again bear his true loyal witness to the Master, when in the martyr's painful death he should pass to his rest at Rome.

*The Jews now conspire against the Life of Paul—The Romans, alarmed for his Safety, send him strongly guarded to Cæsarea, the Headquarters of their Power in those Parts, 12-35.*

Ver. 12. And when it was day, certain of the Jews banded together, and bound themselves under a curse, saying that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul. 'The contrast is great between the peaceful assurance thus secretly given to the faith of the apostle in his place of imprisonment and the active malignity of his enemies in the city' (Howson, *St. Paul*). The Jews here alluded to were doubtless composed of Paul's bitter foes from Asia then present in Jerusalem for the Pentecostal feast, together with his Sadducæan opponents. It is more than probable that a considerable number of these Jews belonged to that wild and fanatic association which played so prominent a part in the Holy Land in the last years of Jerusalem—the Sicarii or assassins. These violent men bound themselves with a dreadful oath (*kherem*, חֵרֶם, *ávétiua*), that is, they invoked the curse of God upon themselves in the event of their violating their vow, binding themselves neither to eat nor drink until they had murdered Paul, the enemy of their race. In the case of such fearful vows, by no means uncommon in that wild time of disorder and hatred, the Talmud, however, provided a loophole of escape for those who so rashly took this burden on themselves; they furnished the means of releasing the man from the vow and the curse, if the carrying it out in its entirety became impossible: 'He that hath vowed not to eat anything, woe to him if he eat, and woe to him if he eat not: if he eat, he sinneth against his vow; if he eat not, he sinneth against his life. What must one do in such a case? Let him approach the wise ones, and they will release him from his vow, as it is written, "*The tongue of the wise is health*," Prov. xii. 18' (from the Talmud, quoted by Lightfoot, *Horæ Heb. et Talm.*). The above is a fair specimen of the casuistry of the Jewish doctors.

Ver. 14. And they came to the chief priests and elders, and said, We have bound ourselves under a great curse, that we will eat nothing

till we have slain Paul. No doubt the party of religious assassins went to that group of the Sanhedrim known as bitterly hostile to Paul. We have no definite information which would tell us that Ananias the high priest was a Sadducee; but from our knowledge that by far the greater number of the priests in high position at that time belonged to that sect, and also from the tone of rancorous hatred assumed by Ananias towards Paul when he was arraigned before the council, we may conclude with some certainty that he did belong to that party, and was one of 'the chief priests' to whom the conspirators came.

Ver. 15. Now therefore ye with the council signify to the chief captain that he bring him down unto you to-morrow . . . and we, or ever he come near, are ready to kill him. This seems at first sight a strange story, that so monstrous a design should have been conceived and communicated to the chief priests and elders, —to the leading members, in fact, of the august council of the Sanhedrim,—and positively should have received the approval of these venerable men; ay, more than their approval, their hearty concurrence and the promise of their assistance. Still, strange as it may seem, it was in perfect accordance with the practice of the leading members of the Jewish state in these unhappy days. We read, for instance, in the *Antiquities* of Josephus, how zealots of Jerusalem had conspired together to assassinate Herod the Great because he had built an amphitheatre and celebrated games in the Holy City. Philo, the famous Alexandrian Jew, who wrote in this age, and may be taken as a fair exponent of the views of morality which were held in the first century of the Christian era in the great Jewish schools, thus writes: 'It is highly proper that all who have a zeal for virtue should have a right to punish with their own hands without delay those who are guilty of this crime' [that is, forsaking what the orthodox Jew considered the worship of the true God] . . . 'not carrying them before any magistrate, but that they should indulge the abhorrence of evil and the love of God which they entertain, by inflicting immediate punishment on such impious apostates—regarding themselves for the time as all things . . . judges . . . accusers, witnesses, the laws, the people; so that, hindered by nothing, they may without fear and with all promptitude espouse the cause of piety' (*Philo*, quoted by Dr. Hackett). 'It is melancholy,' writes Professor Plumptre, 'to remember how often the casuistry of Christian theologians has run in the same groove. In this respect the Jesuit teaching absolves subjects from their allegiance to heretical rulers, and the practical issue of that teaching in the history of the Gunpowder Plot and of the murders perpetrated by Clement (Henry III.) and by Ravallac (Henry IV.) presents only too painful a parallel.'

Ver. 16. And when Paul's sister's son heard of their lying in wait, he went and entered into the castle, and told Paul. It is singular that this is the only mention in the 'Acts' of any of Paul's relations. We hear nothing further of this young man. It is not probable that he or his mother—Paul's sister—was resident in the Holy City, otherwise the apostle would hardly have lodged with Mnason during the visit (chap. xxi. 16). It is more likely that, as Paul had been years before, so his nephew now was a stranger student, per-

haps from Tarsus, in the great Jerusalem schools; and that there he had heard the plot against the arch-traitor to the old customs of Judaism, as some termed him, discussed.

There were evidently many belonging to the family of the missionary apostle. We know there were some dwelling at Tarsus; here at Jerusalem we meet with his nephew; at Rome, we also read in two passages of his kinsmen (Rom. xvi. 7 and 11).

Apparently there was no difficulty of access to Paul in his temporary imprisonment in Antonia. Here, as in several other places, the courtesy of the higher Roman officials towards the seemingly friendless and persecuted missionary is noticeable. See especially Acts xvi. 33, xxiv. 23, xxvi. 32, xxvii. 3, xxviii. 30.

Ver. 17. Then Paul called one of the centurions unto him, and said, Bring this young man unto the chief captain. Attention has been justly called here to the fact that, although Paul had just received the Divine promise of protection in all these present dangers, yet he neglected none of the ordinary means of safety which were presented to him, evidently looking on them as the saving hand of the Lord stretched out to him. There was nothing of wild unreasoning enthusiasm in the great missionary apostle.

Ver. 18. Paul the prisoner called me unto him, and prayed me, etc. The 'prisoner;' the Greek word signifies 'one bound.' We may conclude that Paul was fastened by a chain to the arm of a soldier. As a Roman citizen he was in *custodia militaris*. 'We may well believe that at this time he little thought how long that name (of the prisoner) would be used of him, first by others and then by himself, until it became as a title of honour in which he seemed to glory almost more than in that of apostle. Comp. Eph. iii. 1, iv. 1; Philem. vers. 1 and 9' (Plumptre).

Ver. 19. Then the chief captain took him by the hand. It is evident that the Roman commander was favourably impressed with something in Paul's bearing, and probably with his words. He was clearly glad to be able in any way to assist him. His sympathies are evidently with Paul, not with his priestly foes, as years before Pilate's had been with another prisoner greater than Paul.

Claudius Lysias listens carefully to the story of the plot as it was detailed to him by Paul's sister's son, and is at once convinced of the truth of the information. To avoid the necessity of any further explanation with the Sanhedrim, he makes immediate preparation for sending the prisoner, who had evidently incurred such deep hatred at the hands of the turbulent and seditious Jews, under cover of the night, to the Roman headquarters at Cæsarea, where resided an official of the highest rank. The custody and the ultimate disposal of such an important prisoner as Paul evidently was, the commander of the Jerusalem garrison felt ought to be in the hands of one armed with far greater authority than was possessed by the simple commander of a thousand.

Ver. 23. And he called unto him two centurions, saying, Make ready two hundred soldiers to go to Cæsarea, and horsemen threescore and ten, and spearmen two hundred, at the third hour of the night. Four hundred and seventy soldiers seems to have been a large force to have guarded a single prisoner from the murderous design of forty Sicarii, but the disturbed uneasy state of the entire country must be borne in mind, and

the Roman commander in Antonia was perplexed and alarmed about the whole matter. He suspected there was more in the charge against Paul than met the eye, and was anxious to deliver the accused safe into the hands of the superior authority at Cæsarea. The fact, too, of the Roman citizenship of the prisoner, whose death was evidently earnestly desired by the Jewish Sanhedrim, made him more cautious. This large and powerful escort was to set out in all secrecy, when it was dark, at the third hour of the night,—that is, nine o'clock in the evening,—as Claudius Lysias desired, if possible, to avoid any collision with the zealots and their supporters in the supreme council. There is some doubt as to the meaning of the Greek word translated 'spearmen' (*δυσκλίστοι*), rendered in the Vulgate *lancearios*, as the term is never found in any Greek writings before the time of Constantine Porphyrogenitus, who makes use of it hundreds of years later to describe some light-armed troops. Some commentators, arguing from the meaning of the words with which the term is compounded, have supposed that they were a body-guard who protected the right side of the commanding officer, others that they were military lictors. Ewald suggests they were Arabian auxiliaries attached to the Roman forces in Judæa, Arabia being famous for its slingers. On the whole, our English translation 'spearmen,' which reproduces the Vulgate *lancearii*, is likely to be correct.

Ver. 24. And bring him safe unto Felix the governor. The career of this powerful and unprincipled man, who, owing to his meeting with the despised Jew Paul, has obtained a conspicuous niche in history, is principally interesting to us as affording a good instance of the way in which high position and great dignity were acquired under the rule of the Cæsars in the first and second centuries of the Christian era. Felix and his brother Pallas were originally slaves, and then freedmen in the house of a noble Roman lady, Antonia, mother of the Emperor Claudius. Pallas became the favourite and subsequently minister of the emperor. He procured for his brother Felix the important post of procurator of Judæa about A.D. 52. The historian Tacitus writes of him as one who, trusting to his brother's powerful influence at court, knew he could commit any wrong with impunity. He was notoriously avaricious, cruel, and licentious, but withal a man of great energy and talent, wielding, however, as Tacitus tells us, 'the power of a tyrant with the temper of a slave.' According to Josephus, he was one of the most corrupt and oppressive governors ever despatched from Rome to rule over Judæa. Suetonius, in his history of Claudius, mentions this Roman official as the 'husband (in succession) of three queens:—(1) Drusilla, the daughter of Juba, king of Mauritania, and Selene, the daughter of Antony and Cleopatra. (2) Another princess of the same name—Drusilla—the daughter of Herod Agrippa I., and sister of Herod Agrippa II.; she left her first husband Azizus, king of Emesa, to marry Felix. The name of the third royal lady who married this Roman is unknown.

Felix reigned over Judæa some seven or eight years until he was recalled by Nero, who replaced him by Festus, A.D. 60. He owed his deposition to the fall of his brother Pallas, who was subsequently put to death, A.D. 63.

Vers. 25, 26. He wrote a letter after this manner: Claudius Lysias unto the most excellent governor Felix sendeth greeting. This was in strict accordance with the Roman law, which directed a subordinate official, in sending a prisoner to the higher authority for trial, to send a written statement, termed an 'elogium,' of the whole case. On this occasion, the 'elogium' was rather a letter in favour of Paul than a formal accusation. 'The most excellent' (*τῷ ἀριστέρῳ*) was the official title which was usually given to a governor holding the office of Felix. Tertullus the orator thus addresses the procurator in court (chap. xxiv. 3), and Paul, Festus (chap. xxvi. 25). In his dedication of the Gospel, Luke prefixes the same title to Theophilus (Luke i. 3).

Ver. 27. Then came I with an army, and rescued him, having understood that he was a Roman. This is distinctly a false statement of the facts as they stood. The commander in Antonia wished his superior, Felix, to think that he had interfered on the prisoner's behalf because he found Paul was a Roman citizen; but, in truth, he did not interpose until after Paul had been chained up to be scourged by his own orders. A desire to exhibit his zeal in the public service induced him to write this distorted view of the facts as they occurred. He evidently wished to throw a veil over the grave fault he had committed in ordering a Roman citizen to be scourged. Meyer well calls attention here to the evidence for the genuineness of the letter afforded by this comparatively trivial circumstance. The English Version, 'having come with an army,' is not happy; it is better rendered 'with my soldiery,' or 'with the guard.'

Ver. 29. Whom I perceived to be accused of questions of their law, but to have nothing laid to his charge worthy of death or of bonds. Death the highest, and bonds the lowest penalty of the law. Thus Claudius Lysias for his part, from a Roman's point of view, expressed his belief in Paul's innocence—a similar testimony was borne him by all his Roman judges, and also by King Herod Agrippa. The questions of their law in the Roman commander's view were that this stranger had been in some way or other violating the rules of the great temple of Jerusalem, and had been asserting that he had seen and conversed with a hated Teacher whose death by crucifixion many years previously had been brought about by the Sanhedrim. This dead Rabbi, Paul affirmed, was alive, having risen from the dead. But, thought Claudius Lysias, a Roman citizen surely did not deserve death, or even bonds, for such trivial offences.

Ver. 30. And when it was told me how that the Jews laid wait for the man, I sent straightway to thee. 'Though I thought him innocent,' writes Claudius Lysias, 'yet, hearing of this further plot against the life of a Roman citizen, I judged it wise to refer the whole matter to you, the chief authority in Judæa, as the affair may be more serious than I have deemed it to be.' The soldier evidently suspected the affair of Paul was mixed up with some movement against the Roman power.

Ver. 31. Then the soldiers, as it was commanded them, took Paul, and brought him by night to Antipatris. This was the ancient Caphar Saba (town of Saba), and was built by Herod the Great, and then named after his father Antipater.

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It is about ten miles from Lydda. This town is forty Roman miles from Jerusalem. The escort probably arrived there on the day following the night on which they left the tower of Antonia. There were twenty-six miles still to be travelled before they reached Cæsarea.

Ver. 32. On the morrow they left the horsemen to go with him, and returned to the castle. That is to say, on the morrow after they arrived at Antipatris. Here the foot-soldiers returned to the Jerusalem garrison. As the prisoner had been escorted forty miles from Jerusalem, there was no longer anything to dread from the Sicarii of the plot, and the party of seventy horse were an amply sufficient guard for the remaining twenty-six miles. These were, we read, safely travelled, and Paul was presented to the procurator Felix at Cæsarea.

Ver. 34. He asked of what province he was. Felix was not the principal Roman official in that part of the Empire. The proconsul of Syria bore supreme authority over Judæa. Felix was procurator or deputy of Judæa under that great official. The powers, however, of the procurators were considerable. Still, in the matter of trying a Roman citizen, accused by so mighty a body as the Jewish Sanhedrim, Felix deemed it expedient to inquire respecting the nationality of the prisoner, as it might have been desirable to have sent him at once to the seat of the government of some other procurator or proconsul. Compare the procurator Pilate's action in sending our Lord, a Galilean, to be judged of Herod, Luke xxiii. 6, 7. When he heard he was from Cilicia, he determined to try him at once in Cæsarea. The political motives which induced him to retain a Cilician in Judæa are to us now unknown.

Ver. 35. I will hear thee, said he, when thine accusers are also come. The Greek word rendered 'I will hear,' suggests the idea of a complete and searching investigation into all the matters in question.

And he commanded him to be kept in Herod's judgment hall. Better rendered 'in Herod's prætorium.' This was the palace built by Herod the Great for his own residence; it now was used as the official dwelling of the Roman governor. Most likely some portion of it was set apart as the lodgings of state prisoners. We know later that during the imprisonment at Cæsarea, Paul had many privileges rarely accorded to one in his condition. His friends were allowed to visit him as they pleased (chap. xxiv. 23). He was, we must remember, a Roman prisoner and uncondemned; nor is it improbable that secretly the hostility of the chief priests and Sanhedrim pleaded for him with Felix.

## EXCURSUS.

## THE PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES.

These two parties made up the Sanhedrim during the lifetime of the Lord, and later during the thirty-eight years which elapsed between the resurrection morning and the fall of Jerusalem and breaking up of the Jewish polity. The name of Pharisee, though not the party itself, we first meet with in the Gospels, where these rigid though, it seems, at times hypocritical professors of a strict Judaism meet as in opposition to the broader and more universal teachings of Jesus Christ. Our information respecting them, however,



comes mainly from the Jewish writer Josephus, who composed his annals and memoirs at a time a little, but only a very little, later than the presumed date of the three synoptical Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke). The term Pharisees is a Hebrew (Aramaic) term, and signifies 'the separated ones.' They appeared first as the champions of the old Jewish life and worship which were threatened by the desire of Antiochus Epiphanes to graft on the old life and worship, Greek customs and even worship. We find them later, in the time of the Asmonean John Hyrcanus, a powerful and popular party, in deadly opposition to the spirit which under foreign rule was gradually undermining the ancient life and traditions then growing more and more dear to the majority of the Jewish people, as they lost all hope of political independence. These earnest men busied themselves in collecting the traditions of the older rabbis, and in drawing a more and ever more rigid line between the Jewish and Gentile nations. They taught the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead and of rewards and punishments in another life, and here was the point of contact between them and the disciples of Jesus of Nazareth. In this last age of Israel in Jerusalem, the Pharisees were divided into two schools—the followers of Shammai 'the Binder,' as he was termed, and of Hillel 'the Looser.' The former were rigid in their observance of the Sabbath, hard and even bitter in spirit towards all who disagreed with them. The latter were men of a broader and more universal culture; their moral training was of a more general and gentle spirit, more adapted to the needs and ordinary life of men and women. It was from Jews of the school of Shammai that the persecutors of Christianity were chiefly drawn.

The strange fact connected with these 'separated ones' was that they were utterly unconnected with the priesthood, and often in bitter opposition to it. The higher offices of the Jewish hierarchy were held during the life of our Lord and the period treated of in the 'Acts' by men who belonged to the other party in the Sanhedrim, the Sadducees. The word 'Sadducee' is connected with the Hebrew word signifying 'righteous,' but it is not clear whether the sect derived their name from this word,—that is, from some pretensions originally

made by its members to a true or perhaps exclusive righteousness,—or from one Zadok, the disciple of Antigonus, who taught that 'men should not be servants who do their master's will for a reward;' and the scholar and his cheerless school, it is said, developed this teaching into a denial of the resurrection which formed the reward for the righteous. In the time of Jesus Christ and His followers, most of the leading members of the priesthood, including the varied distinguished men who held the office of high priest during the last forty years of Jerusalem, were Sadducees, and with them were associated many of the wealthiest and most influential of the Jews. Admitting the authority of the written law, they declined to receive the mass of traditions which had grown up about it. They denied the existence of angels and spirits, and taught there was no resurrection, no such thing as immortality. On every point they were at issue with the Lord and His disciples. Every fresh convert to Christianity was an additional hater of Sadduceeism. No wonder, then, that Caiaphas and Annas watched for the moment when they could crucify the Lord, or that their successor in the high-priestly office, Ananias, thirsted to destroy the Lord's disciple, the brilliant and successful Paul of Tarsus. The irreconcilable differences in religious belief between these two parties in the state and great council was one of the principal causes of the weakness of Israel during those last sad years. We can scarcely estimate *now* what the effect upon the people must have been of the dreary unbelief of the great priestly order. To Sadduceeism and its cold and passionless teaching must be ascribed in no small degree the rapid spread of such wild enthusiastic societies as the zealots and the Sicarii (assassins). The mass of the nation revolted from the polished unbelief of their national leaders. The avowed disbelief of the hierarchy of Israel in the glorious hopes of an hereafter, repelled and alienated the hearts of that strange people, which through such varied fortune and misfortune ever clung with a passionate love to the old promises made to their fathers, and thousands were thus induced to welcome the fanaticism and wild enthusiasm of those sects who contributed in so large a degree to the final catastrophe.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

### *Paul at Cæsarea—The Trial before Felix—Tertullus the Platonian's Speech accusing Paul—The Apostle's Defence.*

1 **A**ND after <sup>a</sup> five days <sup>b</sup> Ananias the high priest <sup>c</sup> descended <sup>d</sup> with the elders, and *with* a certain orator *named* Tertullus, who <sup>e</sup> informed <sup>f</sup> the governor against Paul. And when he was called *forth*,<sup>g</sup> Tertullus began to accuse *him*, saying,

Seeing that by thee we enjoy great quietness,<sup>h</sup> and that very worthy deeds are done unto this nation<sup>i</sup> by thy providence,

<sup>1</sup> *better*, 'came down.'

<sup>2</sup> *better*, 'summoned.'

<sup>3</sup> *literally*, 'peace.'

<sup>4</sup> *better rendered*, 'and that many excellent regulations are secured to this nation,' etc.

<sup>a</sup> Cp. ch. xxi. 18, 27 with ver. 11.  
<sup>b</sup> Ch. xxiii. 2.  
<sup>c</sup> Cp. ch. xxiii. 30, 35.  
<sup>d</sup> Ch. xxv. 6, 7 (Gk.) Cp. ch. xxv. 1.  
<sup>e</sup> See ch. xxiii. 15.  
<sup>f</sup> Ver. 10. See Mat. xxvii. 2.

- 3 We <sup>f</sup> accept *it* always, and in all places, <sup>e</sup> most noble <sup>b</sup> Felix, <sup>f</sup> See Lu. viii. 40.  
 4 with all thankfulness. Notwithstanding, that I be not further <sup>f</sup> See Lu. i. 3.  
 tedious unto thee, I pray *thee* that thou wouldest hear us of thy <sup>a</sup> 2 Cor. x. 1  
 in the Gk.  
 5 <sup>a</sup> clemency a few words. For we have found this man a pesti- <sup>i</sup> So ch. xvii. 6.  
 lent *fellow*, and <sup>i</sup> a mover of sedition <sup>b</sup> among all the Jews <sup>f</sup> See Mat.  
 throughout <sup>a</sup> the world, and a ringleader of the <sup>j</sup> sect of the <sup>i</sup> xxiv. 14.  
 Nazarenes: Who also hath gone about <sup>a</sup> <sup>i</sup> to profane the <sup>i</sup> So ch. xxi.  
 temple: whom we took, and would have <sup>m</sup> judged according to <sup>a</sup> 28.  
 7 our law. <sup>m</sup> But the chief captain Lysias came *upon us*, and with <sup>m</sup> Cp. Jo. xviii.  
 8 great violence took *him* away out of our hands, <sup>o</sup> Commanding <sup>i</sup> Cp. ch. xxi.  
 his accusers to come unto thee: <sup>o</sup> by <sup>o</sup> examining of whom <sup>i</sup> 32, 33,  
 thyself mayest take knowledge of all these *things* whereof we <sup>o</sup> xxiii. 27.  
 9 accuse him. And the Jews also assented, <sup>o</sup> saying that these <sup>o</sup> Ch. xxiii. 30.  
*things* were so. <sup>o</sup> See ch. iv. 9.  
 10 Then Paul, after that <sup>o</sup> the governor had beckoned <sup>o</sup> See ch. xix.  
 him to speak, answered, Forasmuch as I know that thou hast <sup>o</sup> 33.  
 been of many years a judge unto this nation, I do the more <sup>o</sup> Cp. ch. xxi.  
 11 cheerfully <sup>o</sup> answer for myself: Because that thou mayest <sup>i</sup> 18, 27 with  
 understand, that there are *yet* but <sup>o</sup> twelve days since I <sup>o</sup> ver. 1.  
 went <sup>o</sup> up to Jerusalem <sup>o</sup> for to worship. <sup>o</sup> And they neither found me <sup>o</sup> Ch. xxi. 4,  
 in the temple <sup>o</sup> disputing with any *man*, neither raising up the <sup>i</sup> 12, 13.  
 13 people, neither in the synagogues, nor in the city: <sup>o</sup> Neither <sup>o</sup> See ch. viii.  
 14 can they prove *the things* whereof they now accuse me. But <sup>o</sup> 27.  
 this I confess unto thee, that after <sup>o</sup> the way which they call <sup>o</sup> Ch. xxv. 8.  
<sup>o</sup> heresy, <sup>o</sup> so <sup>o</sup> worship I the God of my fathers, <sup>o</sup> believing <sup>o</sup> So ch. xxviii.  
 all *things* which are written in <sup>o</sup> the law and the prophets: <sup>o</sup> 17.  
 15 And have <sup>o</sup> hope towards God, which they themselves also <sup>o</sup> See ch. xvii.  
 allow, <sup>o</sup> that there shall be a <sup>o</sup> resurrection of the dead, <sup>o</sup> both <sup>o</sup> So ch. xxv. 7.  
 16 of the just and unjust. And herein do I exercise myself, <sup>o</sup> to <sup>o</sup> See ch. ix. 2.  
 have always a conscience <sup>o</sup> void of offence toward God, and <sup>o</sup> Gk. as ver. 5;  
 17 toward men. Now <sup>o</sup> after <sup>o</sup> many years I came <sup>o</sup> to bring alms <sup>o</sup> ch. v. 17, xv.  
 18 to my nation, and offerings. <sup>o</sup> Whereupon <sup>o</sup> certain Jews from <sup>o</sup> 5, xxviii. 22.  
<sup>o</sup> So 2 Tim. i.  
<sup>o</sup> 3. See  
<sup>o</sup> ch. xxvii. 23.  
<sup>o</sup> Ch. xxvi. 27.  
<sup>o</sup> Ch. xxvi. 22,  
<sup>o</sup> xxviii. 23.  
<sup>o</sup> So Rom. iii.  
<sup>o</sup> 21.  
<sup>o</sup> Ver. 21. See  
<sup>o</sup> ch. xxiii. 6.  
<sup>o</sup> See Dan.  
<sup>o</sup> xii. 2.  
<sup>o</sup> See ch. xxiii.  
<sup>o</sup> 1. Cp. Job  
<sup>o</sup> xxvii. 6.  
<sup>o</sup> 1 Cor. x. 32;  
<sup>o</sup> Phil. i. 10 in  
<sup>o</sup> the Gk.  
<sup>o</sup> See Mat.  
<sup>o</sup> xxvi. 61.  
<sup>o</sup> Cp. ch. xviii.  
<sup>o</sup> 22, 23, xix. 8,  
<sup>o</sup> 10, xx. 31.  
<sup>o</sup> Rom. xv.  
<sup>o</sup> 25-28; 1 Cor.  
<sup>o</sup> xvi. 1, 3;  
<sup>o</sup> 2 Cor. viii. 4,  
<sup>o</sup> ix. 1, 12. Cp  
<sup>o</sup> ch. xi. 29;  
<sup>o</sup> Gal. ii. 10.  
<sup>o</sup> Lu. xii. 1  
<sup>o</sup> (Gk.); ch.  
<sup>o</sup> xxvi. 12.  
<sup>o</sup> Ch. xxi. 26,  
<sup>o</sup> 27, xxvi. 21.

<sup>o</sup> or 'most excellent.'

<sup>o</sup> Some, though by no means all the older authorities, read 'seditions' instead of 'sedition' here.

<sup>o</sup> omit 'the' before 'Nazarenes.'

<sup>o</sup> literally, 'hath tried.'

<sup>o</sup> The majority of the more ancient authorities here omit the words, 'and would have judged according to our law. But the chief captain Lysias came upon us, and with great violence took him away out of our hands, commanding his accusers to come unto thee.'

<sup>o</sup> The older authorities here, instead of 'assented,' read 'assailed him.'

<sup>o</sup> better, 'had signed to him.'

<sup>o</sup> The older authorities here read simply 'cheerfully.'

<sup>o</sup> or better rendered, 'which they call a sect.'

<sup>o</sup> literally, 'which are according to the law and written in the prophets.'

<sup>o</sup> literally, 'which they themselves also wait for.'

<sup>o</sup> Some, though by no means all the older authorities, omit the words 'o the dead.'

<sup>o</sup> better, 'while doing this,' or 'in the midst of these occupations.'

18 Asia<sup>18</sup> found me purified in the temple, neither with multi-<sup>m See ch. ii. 9.</sup>  
 19 tude, nor with tumult: "Who ought to have been here<sup>18</sup> before<sup>m Ch. xxiii. 30.</sup>  
 20 thee, and object,<sup>19</sup> if they had ought against me. Or else let<sup>xxv. 16.</sup>  
 these same *here* say, if<sup>20</sup> they have found any evil doing in me,  
 21 "while I stood before the council, Except *it be* for this one<sup>o Ch. xxii. 30.</sup>  
 voice, that I cried standing among them, "Touching the resur-<sup>o Ch. xxiii. 6.</sup>  
 rection of the dead I am called in question by you this day.  
 22 And when Felix heard these *things*,<sup>21</sup> having more "perfect<sup>q See ch. xxiii.</sup>  
 knowledge of "that way, he deferred them, and said, "When<sup>15.</sup>  
 Lysias the chief captain shall come down, I will "know the<sup>r See ch. ix. a.</sup>  
 23 uttermost of your matter.<sup>22</sup> And he commanded a centurion<sup>s Ver. 7.</sup>  
 to keep Paul,<sup>23</sup> and "to let *him* have liberty,<sup>24</sup> and that *he*<sup>t So ch. xxv.</sup>  
 should forbid none of his "acquaintance to minister or come<sup>25</sup>  
 24 unto him. And after certain days, when Felix came with his<sup>21 (Gk.).</sup>  
 wife Drusilla, which was a Jewess, he sent for Paul, and heard<sup>m Ch. xxviii.</sup>  
 25 him concerning "the faith in Christ.<sup>26</sup> And as he reasoned of<sup>16. Cp.</sup>  
 righteousness, "temperance, and "judgment to come, Felix<sup>ch. xxvii. 3.</sup>  
 trembled, and answered, Go *thy way* for this time; "when I<sup>o Ch. iv. 23:</sup>  
 26 have a convenient season, I will call for thee. He hoped also<sup>1 Tim. v. 8</sup>  
 that "money should have been given him of Paul, that he<sup>in the Gk.</sup>  
 might loose him: "wherefore he sent for him the oftener, and<sup>See Jo. i. 12.</sup>  
 27 communed with him. But after two years Porcius Festus came<sup>m See ch. xx.</sup>  
 into Felix' room: and Felix, "willing to show the Jews a<sup>27.</sup>  
 pleasure, left Paul bound.<sup>s Gal. v. 23:</sup>  
<sup>s Pet. i. 6.</sup>  
<sup>r See ch. xvii.</sup>  
<sup>31.</sup>  
<sup>s So ch. xvii.</sup>  
<sup>32. See</sup>  
<sup>Isa. iv. 6.</sup>  
<sup>a See ver. 17.</sup>  
<sup>b Ch. xxv. 9.</sup>  
<sup>So ch. xii. 3.</sup>

<sup>18</sup> *The translation here should run, 'While doing this they found me purified in the temple, neither with a crowd nor with tumult: but there were certain Jews from Asia—who should have been here,' etc. The greater part, though not all, of the older authorities read as above. The Authorized Version here does not represent the 'Received (Receptus) Greek Text,' which in this case, singularly enough, is the best attested.*

<sup>19</sup> *more literally, 'and to accuse me.'*

<sup>20</sup> *The older authorities omit 'if;,' render then, 'what wrong-doing they have found in me.' Some, though not the majority, of the older authorities omit 'in me.'*

<sup>21</sup> *The older authorities here omit 'heard these things;,' render then, 'But Felix put them off, having,' etc.*

<sup>22</sup> *or better, 'I will inquire fully into your case.'*

<sup>23</sup> *The older authorities omit 'Paul;,' render then literally, 'And he gave orders . . . that he should be kept.'*

<sup>24</sup> *better, 'and should have indulgence.'*

<sup>25</sup> *The older authorities omit the words 'or come.'*

<sup>26</sup> *Many of the older authorities insert 'Jesus' after 'Christ.'*

<sup>27</sup> *The older authorities omit the words 'that he might loose him.'*

*The Trial of St. Paul at Casarea before Felix—Tertullus, on the part of the Sanhedrim, accuses the Apostle, 1-9.*

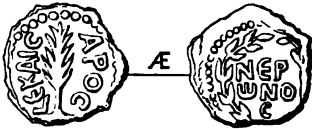
Ver. 1. And after five days Ananias the high priest descended with the elders. That is to say, five days after Paul's departure with the armed escort from Jerusalem. Roman usage required that a case referred to the higher tribunal like this should be proceeded with as soon as possible. The high priest himself came in person

with some of the sanhedrists, as the case was of great importance to the Sadducee party. 'Descended,' more intelligibly rendered 'came down,' the usual expression when a journey from the high land on which the old capital was built to the low coast district of Casarea is spoken of.

And with a certain orator named Tertullus. The 'orator' or rhetorician was an advocate acquainted with the forms of Roman law, employed by the Sanhedrim to conduct their cases in the governor's court at Casarea; the Latin term is

'orator forensis' or 'causidicus.' There were many of these men practising in the provincial governors' courts, some of them thus training themselves for the more important contentions of the Forum in Rome (see Cicero's oration for Cœlius). It has been urged that this address of Tertullus was spoken in the Latin tongue, as originally Latin appears to have been insisted on as the language of the law courts throughout the Empire. But from a passage in Dio Cassius, it seems that under the emperors Greek was permitted, if more convenient to be used, even in Rome itself. It is most improbable that Latin could have been used in a provincial court of Judæa; we may therefore conclude with some certainty that the language used on this occasion was Greek. The alleged Latinisms of the speech of Tertullus sprang naturally from the forms of procedure and certain of the technical terms being originally derived from Rome. The name Tertullus is a common one, being a diminutive of Tertius; Tertullianus, the famous Christian lawyer and writer (A.D. 190-200) in North Africa, is another form of the same name as Tertius or Tertullus. Ewald conjectures this lawyer, employed by the Sanhedrim, was one of the Jerusalem synagogue of the Libertines, mentioned in chap. vi. 9, A.D. 33-34.

Ver. 2. *Tertullus began to accuse him, saying, Seeing that by thee we enjoy great quietness.* The counsel for the Sanhedrim appears to have commenced his address before the court of Felix



Coin of Felix.

with the most exaggerated flattery of the procurator; yet at the bottom of his fulsome compliments, it could not be denied there was a substratum of truth. Felix, during his long and burdensome administration, had at least distinguished himself by his strong measures to put down brigandage and deeds of violence in Judæa, and had waged ceaseless warfare against those wandering bands of Sicarii (assassins) which had begun to infest the country. Tacitus, no friend to Felix or his government, relates how, on the occasion of a bitter quarrel between Felix and the governor of Galilee, V. Cumanus, the procurator of Judæa was supported by the president of Syria, Quadratus, and *quietness was restored to the province* ('quies Provinciae reddita,' *Ann.* xii. 54). 'As to the number of robbers whom he caused to be crucified, and of those whom he brought to be punished, they were a multitude not to be enumerated' (*Wars of the Jews*, Josephus). Yet, on the other hand, this cruel and ambitious man kept in his pay a number of Sicarii himself, fanning instead of really quelling the seditious spirit then everywhere abroad. On one occasion, for instance, the hired assassins of Felix murdered in the temple, at the instigation of their employer, Jonathan the reigning high priest, once the friend of the Romans. It was this infamous governor to whom the advocate of the Sanhedrim was pleased to address such false honeyed words, in the hope of gaining his favourable attention to his accusation of Paul.

*And that very worthy deeds are done unto this*

*nation.* Rather 'reforms' or 'improvements,' according to the reading of the more trustworthy mss. There was absolutely no ground for this statement of Tertullus; within two years of this time, Felix was accused by the Jews of bad government, and the accusation supported by such undeniable proof that he was recalled from his province to Rome, and only escaped punishment through the influence of his brother Pallas, which, though waning, was still powerful at the court of the Cæsar.

*By thy providence.* *Tuâ providentiâ, Providentiâ Cæsaris,* is a common inscription on the coins of the emperors. It was a skilful and delicate piece of flattery, to weave this well-known phrase of imperial adulation into his words of praise on this occasion.

Ver. 3. *We accept it always, and in all places, most noble Felix.* 'Not only here in thy presence and at this moment do we acknowledge our deep debt of gratitude as a nation to thee; but also at all times and in all places do we speak in grateful terms of thee,'—thus adding to the gross words of flattery already used, a most transparent falsehood. The name of Felix was among Jews everywhere a byword for cruelty, lust, and greed.

Ver. 4. *Notwithstanding, that I be not further tedious unto thee.* It were as though the advocate saw signs of impatience in the unrighteous judge before him. Felix, who was with all his faults an able man, could not avoid discerning the shameless nature of the lying words of the unprincipled plausible orator.

*I pray thee that thou wouldest hear me of thy clemency.* One falsehood more did Tertullus think proper to introduce into his harangue. The 'clemency' of Felix, to which as a well-known characteristic feature of the governor's conduct he alluded, was perhaps the last point he ought to have dwelt on in that cruel selfish life.

Ver. 5. *For we have found this man a pestilent fellow.* The Greek word rendered 'a pestilent fellow,' literally signifies 'a plague or pestilence.' But it is used by Demosthenes, as here, to designate a designing, dangerous person.

*A mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world.* The 'world' here means the Roman *orbis terrarum*, in other words, 'the Roman Empire,' which, in the days of Paul, embraced so vast an area in the East as well as the West. This charge of teaching sedition was no new one. The Jews of Thessalonica, when they arrested Jason and other friends of Paul, accused the apostle and his companions of being 'those who had turned the world upside down . . . doing things contrary to the decrees of Cæsar, saying that there is another king, Jesus' (see chap. xvii. 6, 7). It was the same accusation which had in old days worked upon Pilate when the Master stood before him. The jealous Roman governors were always ready to give ear to any information respecting alleged treason against the Majesty of the state.

*And a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes.* This was really in the eyes of the Jews the offence which Paul had committed. It was here urged by the Sanhedrim advocate Tertullus, before a Roman tribunal, as an offence against the laws of the Empire, inasmuch as the prisoner was an acknowledged chief of a worship not licensed and approved by the state, and an introducer of strange gods.

This is the only passage in the New Testament where the word 'Nazarenes' is used to denote 'the Christians.' We know it was the ordinary Jewish appellation by which the disciples of Jesus were then known. They (the Jews) could not of course use the ordinary term 'Christians,' by which name the disciples of Jesus were known among Pagans. 'Christ' was to every Jew a sacred name, and to these blinded ones still remained a title unappropriated. They were eager to call 'the Crucified Lord' the Nazarene, the citizen of a nameless city; and they chose the dishonoured title as the heritage of those who called Him Master and Lord, styling them 'Nazarenes.' The name is still used as the designation of the Christians by Jews and Mohammedans.

Ver. 6. **Who also hath gone about to profane the temple.** More literally, 'who even tried to profane.' It is noticeable that here the error of the tumultuous Jews, who, when they saw Paul in the temple, at once accused Him of having profaned the holy building by the introduction of a Gentile into the sacred enclosure, is corrected. Here the careful lawyer modifies the original accusation, and merely states the prisoner had attempted to profane the Jerusalem temple—an offence which the Jews might punish with death, even in the event of the transgressor being a Roman citizen. There were thus three distinct grave charges brought against the accused Paul by the Sanhedrim: (1) that he was one that excited seditions in different parts of the Empire; (2) that, as a leader of the Nazarene sect, he was an introducer of strange gods, a teacher of an unlawful religion; (3) that he had attempted to profane the Jerusalem temple—an offence which, by the direct permission of the Roman government, was punishable by the Jews with death.

**And would have judged.** . . . Ver. 8. **Commanding his accusers to come unto thee.** This whole passage, parts of vers. 6, 7, 8, according to the strict rules of criticism, must be expunged from our New Testament. The critical evidence for and against the words is as follows: The passage is omitted in five out of the six of the great Greek (uncial) mss., upon which we rely here for our text of the Acts,—the exception being Codex E of the sixth or seventh century,—and in most of the versions, the Syriac being the exception. Still, the fact that Codex E, the famous MS. of the Acts of Archbishop Laud (belonging to the sixth century), now in the Bodleian library, Oxford, contains it, as do also those more ancient Syriac versions, and that Chrysostom quotes it, inclines us to the opinion it was very likely a later and comparatively speaking little-heeded addition of the author (St. Luke) to his original writings. Perhaps Dean Alford's compromise, by which he prints the disputed words, but encloses them in a bracket [...] thus, is the fairest and best solution of an acknowledged difficulty. There is no doctrinal gain or loss by the omission or retention of the passage: a better sense certainly is gained by retaining the words as we find them in our English Version; so that, as Meyer justly observes, if they are genuine, it is difficult to see why any one should have left them out.

'We would have judged,' or better, 'we wished to judge.' This hardly agrees with the statement of chap. xxi. 31, 'and as they went about to kill him;' or with chap. xxvi. 21, 'the Jews caught me in the temple, and went about to kill me.'

Still, the unfair, untruthful gloss with which the advocate covers the transaction, well agrees with the general false tone of his whole speech.

Ver. 7. **But the chief captain Lysias came upon us, and with great violence took him away out of our hands.** Here again Tertullus mis-states the facts. When the Roman soldiers came on the scene, the Jews evidently at once released Paul without further violence; 'When they saw the chief captain and the soldiers, they left beating of Paul' (chap. xxi. 32). The Sanhedrim council were extremely bitter against Claudius Lysias, and the intention evidently of their advocate's words here (if we admit them as genuine), was to insinuate that all was going on in order and in strict conformity to the law, until the commander in the castle of Antonia violently and oppressively interfered.

Ver. 8. **By examining of whom thyself mayest take knowledge of all these things, whereof we accuse him.** If the disputed words are left in the text as in our English Version, then 'of whom' refers of course to Claudius Lysias. Some have supposed that Tertullus suggested questions by torture should be applied; but this is most doubtful, for both Claudius Lysias and Paul were Roman citizens. If, however, we omit the words in accordance with the ordinary rules of criticism, then 'of whom' must refer to St. Paul.

Ver. 9. **And the Jews also assented, saying that these things were so.** The rendering of the better authenticated reading, *εὐκρίτως* instead of *εὐκρίτους*, would be: 'And the Jews also assailed him (or them);' that is, they joined their voices to their advocate's in his charges against Paul, and probably against Claudius Lysias also, bearing their testimony to the truth of the facts as alleged in court by Tertullus.

*Paul's Defence against the Sanhedrim's Accusation before Felix, Procurator of Judæa, 10-21.*

Ver. 10. **Then Paul, after that the governor had beckoned unto him to speak, answered.** Paul's defence was a strange contrast to the lying flatteries and the distorted accusations which made up the speech of the Sanhedrim advocate Tertullus. He prefaces his masterly address by a few graceful, well-chosen words of courtesy to the Roman official presiding over the court, in which he simply expresses his contentment at having to defend himself before a judge who had had such ample opportunities of making himself acquainted with the condition of the Jewish nation and its varied schools of thought: in the present instance, he added, the task of the judge would be an easy one; for only twelve days had elapsed since he, Paul, had arrived at Jerusalem as a pilgrim, and in that time he had certainly engaged in no dispute or argument which could possibly stir up sedition. The prisoner then passed to the second charge, the being a 'Nazarene ringleader.' He certainly did belong to that sect, but he worshipped no strange Gods. His God was the God of his fathers; his creed, the creed of the great bulk of the Jewish nation, a religion acknowledged and sanctioned by Roman law—the central point of which creed was the belief in the resurrection of the dead, in which belief, surely, his accusers shared.

From this he turned to the third and last charge pressed against him, 'the profanation of the temple.' Far from having profaned that sacred house, his very object in coming to Jerusalem was, after distributing the alms he had collected in far

lands for the poor of his people, to perform certain holy rites enjoined on pilgrims in connection with the temple; and it was in the carrying of these out in the temple, that some foreign Jews from Asia seized him and accused him of profanity. Where were these men who had brought such strange meaningless charges against him? Surely they ought to have been present in person. If they, the real accusers, however, have for some unknown reason not chosen to present themselves, let these, pointing to the Sanhedrim representatives, say plainly what evil they have found me doing or saying, except that one assertion of mine respecting the resurrection of the dead.

Forasmuch as I know that thou hast been of many years a judge unto this nation. We know Felix had been procurator since A.D. 51-52; he had therefore been 'judge' now six or seven years, a comparatively long period at a time when these higher magistrates were changed and shifted so constantly. It is, however, probable that he had held office among the Jewish people for even a much longer time, for Tacitus speaks of him as governor of Samaria when Cumanus was Procurator of Judea. If this were the case, it would give him some four years more experience of Jewish manners and customs.

I do the more cheerfully answer for myself. Paul felt at least his judge had had, during his long years of office, ample opportunities of becoming acquainted with the character of the leaders of the Jews, with their jealousies and narrowness, and with the peculiarities of the people generally. Possibly, too, in the background the apostle felt that Felix knew something, from his long residence in the province, of the Christians, and of their harmless, blameless lives; and how unlikely it was that one of *their* leaders should ever wish to stir up sedition.

Ver. 11. Because that thou mayest understand, that there are yet but twelve days since I went up to Jerusalem for to worship. The 'twelve days' are best reckoned thus:—

1st Day.—Arrival at Jerusalem; meeting with James, the Lord's brother, the head of the Christian Church at Jerusalem.

2d Day.—Levitical purification, and first visit to the temple as a Nazarite pilgrim.

3d, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th Days.—The period of the Nazarite ceremonies and offerings, closed with the attack on Paul by Asian pilgrims, and his subsequent arrest by Claudius Lysias.

8th Day.—The apostle is arraigned before the Sanhedrim.

9th Day.—In the castle of Antonia; the assassination plot; Paul leaves Jerusalem for Cæsarea, guarded by the military escort.

10th Day.—The party arrives at Antipatris.

11th Day.—The prisoner is delivered over to Felix in Cæsarea.

12th Day.—At Cæsarea; in the judgment hall of Herod.

13th Day.—Paul appears before the court of Felix.

This computation would allow for the statement of ver. 1: 'After five days, Ananias the high priest descended with the elders;' and also for Paul's: 'Twelve days since I went up to Jerusalem for to worship.' A good deal of time has been spent, we might even say wasted, in the calculation of these days, and how they were to be reckoned so as to justify the various notes as to time scattered up

and down the narrative. These calculations, it should be remembered, are always rough: ones—now part of a day is reckoned, now it is omitted. Nothing depends really on the *exact* harmony of such a recital. Like the other small chronological and geographical alleged discrepancies in these Acts, it is only the cavilling, hostile spirit seeking to find errors where none really exist, which finds difficulties in this noble and faithful record of the laying the foundation stories of Christianity. Paul prefaces his defence by stating his object in coming up to Jerusalem: it was to worship, and yet he was charged with profanity; but with this part of the accusation he proposed to deal later. He touches at first the point more likely to affect a Roman judge, the charge of stirring up sedition.

Ver. 12. And they neither found me in the temple disputing with any man, neither raising up the people, neither in the synagogues, nor in the city. He urges that this accusation of exciting sedition was simply incapable of proof. He takes carefully each of the places of public resort, and disposes of them one by one, challenging his adversaries to traverse, if they can, his statement. Nowhere had he publicly disputed with the hope of exciting a tumult—not in the crowded temple courts, nor in the more retired and quiet synagogue meeting; nor had he gone preaching and speaking 'up and down' [for this is the literal translation of the Greek *pará* here] the streets of the capital.

Ver. 14. But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers. More accurately rendered, 'after the way which they call a sect.' The word translated 'heresy' (*αἵρεσις*) is represented by 'sect' in ver. 5. Paul here defends himself against the second accusation, 'the being a ringleader of the Nazarene sect.' He boldly and gladly at once proclaims, as a long line of glorious confessors have done since his day, that he is a Christian; but he adds, Christian or Nazarene though he be, he is a worshipper of no strange gods, but *his* God is the God of his Jewish fathers. For fidelity to this worship surely he deserves no punishment at the hands of the government, for the Jewish religion was countenanced and protected by Rome. Though a Nazarene, he was still a Jew.

Believing all things which are written in the Law and in the Prophets. Yes, he asserted he was a true Jew, believing all the glorious promises written in the Law and Prophets. In this faith of his he followed out the words of the Master: 'Think not that I am come to destroy the Law and the Prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil' (Matt. v. 17). In other words, Paul denied that in becoming a Christian or a Nazarene he had in any way apostatized from the faith of his fathers. Christianity to him was but the fulfilment of Judaism.

Ver. 15. And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and of the unjust. That is to say, his belief in the Law and the Prophets gave him a hope *founded on God*, because His word and the promises contained in the Law and the Prophets furnish the only grounds for such a hope. The hope was, as he went on to say, that there would surely be a resurrection. Nor was he singular in holding this certain expectation. These, he said, pointing to members of the Sanhedrim in the court, and to

the other Jews present—these hold it with me. Such an appeal tells us that the dissension between the Pharisees and Sadducees in the Sanhedrim alluded to in chap. xxiii. 7 had been speedily arranged, and that both parties had agreed together to compass the destruction of the famous Gentile missionary. Paul with justice refers to the belief in the resurrection as the *general* belief of the Jewish nation, the sceptical opinions of the Sadducees influencing only a very few, comparatively speaking. 'The Sadducees,' writes Josephus, 'were able to persuade none but the rich; the Pharisees had the multitude on their side' (*Antiquities*). Thus he explained to Felix his faith was the faith of the people, the faith of his fathers; and the devout hope of the resurrection which he and his brother Nazarenes put forward so prominently, and which evidently was a deep offence to some of the more prominent members of the great Jewish council—the devout hope of the resurrection was, after all, entertained in the hearts of the majority of the Jewish people. 'Hast thou,' asks Lange here, 'this hope? If the Spirit has not yet imparted it to thee, pause not until thou art assured of thy blessed resurrection; pause not, for there can be nothing more awful than to die without the hope of the resurrection.'

Lange has also an exhaustive note on the devout hope of the resurrection being the ancient heritage of the Jewish race: 'The hope of the resurrection is established on a doctrine, the glory of which did not arise for the first time in the New Testament. This golden thread of eternal life passes, on the contrary, through the whole of the Old Testament.

'The Creator who animated the dust of the ground with His breath, the covenantal God who made an everlasting covenant (Gen. xvii. 7) with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, is not a God of the dead, but of the living. That hope was a source of comfort to Job (Job xix. 25-27); Isaiah (xxvi. 19) foretold it; Daniel (xii. 2) bore witness to it.

'It is, however, true that this hope first acquired a firm foundation, and was endowed with life and productive power through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.'

Ver. 16. **And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God and toward men.** 'Herein;' that is, 'for this reason,' because of his belief in the future resurrection; or, in other words, because he held the doctrine of the resurrection of the just and unjust, not as a *mere speculative* doctrine, but as a grave and awful reality. The rule of his life was to struggle to keep himself from sin. Plumptre strikingly notices here 'that these words of Paul must have been almost as bitter to Felix as to Ananias, but he has at all events the decency to listen in silence.'

Paul's belief—this is above all things most noteworthy—was anything but a merely speculative, it was a real and living faith. He lived, or rather tried to live, as though he believed, and taught others to do the same. The Greek word rendered 'do I exercise myself' (*ἀσκέω*), tells us of the restless, ceaseless warfare within waged by this true gallant soldier of Christ to keep his conscience, not only in the sight of men, but before the unseen majesty of God, white and pure.

Ver. 17. **Now after many years I came to bring alms to my nation, and offerings.** The

Greek word *πολλοί*, translated 'many,' rather signifies 'several.' Some four years had elapsed since the apostle's last visit to the Holy City (chap. xviii. 22). The 'alms' here alluded to were those sums of money Paul and his companions (notably Titus the Gentile) had been collecting for a long time past with vast pains in the churches of Macedonia and Achaia for the relief of the impoverished church of Jerusalem. Here, and here only in this casual way, do we find a mention of this generous work of which we hear so much in the epistles of St. Paul written in this period of his life. Paley (*Horæ Paulinæ*) calls attention to this as to one of the more striking of those 'undesigned coincidences' which exist between the 'Epistles' and the 'Acts,' and which furnish us with an independent but at the same time most powerful proof of the credibility of the New Testament writers. The 'offerings' (*προσφοράς*) which he also came to bring were for the temple and its services: they included the usual sacrifices customary at the feast of Pentecost, and also those special contributions which were part of the Nazarite's vow (chap. xxi. 23-26). Paul is here replying to the third charge alleged by the advocate Tertullus, viz. that he attempted to profane the temple; so he mentions what brought him at that Pentecost feast to Jerusalem—a strange purpose indeed for one intending to do dishonour to the holy house on Mount Zion! He came to show his love to his people, the suffering Jewish Christians of the Holy City, bringing them alms painfully and wearily gathered from many a poor and struggling foreign Gentile congregation, and at the same time to worship in the ancient temple of his God, while he laid his offerings before its altars at the season of the time-honoured Pentecost festival.

Ver. 18. **Whereupon certain Jews from Asia found me purified in the temple, neither with multitude nor with tumult.** 'Whereupon;' literally, 'in which,' 'in the midst of which occupations certain Jews from Asia found me.' The reading of the greater number of the more trustworthy MSS. here is *ἐν αὐτῷ*, instead of the received text *ἐν αὐτῷ*. This feminine form of the relative pronoun agrees with *προσφοράς*, offerings; and thus the meaning of Paul's words was as follows: 'These busybody strangers from Asia [Ephesus] found me in the temple certainly, but, far from *profaning* it, positively engaged in performing the rites and ceremonies which belonged to the fulfilment of a Nazarite's vow.'

There is another slight variation here in the reading of the more trustworthy authorities, viz. these older MSS. insert after *ἐν αὐτῷ* (*certain*), *δι* (*and* or *but*). Now, slight as this variation seems, it necessitates a different rendering of the whole clause, which must run thus: 'In the midst of which occupations they' (that is, the Jews) 'found me purified' (as a Nazarite) 'in the temple, neither with multitude nor with tumult; but certain (*ἐν αὐτῷ δι*) Jews from Asia.' Here a verb is wanting to make the sense perfect. It was no doubt *this want* of a verb to complete the sentence which induced many MSS. (though not the majority) to leave out *δι*, and thus make 'certain Jews' the subject of *εὑρεθῆναι* (*found*).

The explanation of the omission is found, no doubt, in the speaker's earnestness, Luke having given us the very words (and no more) of this remarkable defence. Some verb like *εὑρεθῆναι*

is required, suggests Dr. Hackett: 'But certain Jews from Asia stirred up the tumult,' Ver. 19. 'Who ought now to be here.'

Ver. 19. **Who ought to have been here before thee, and object, if they had ought against me.** This was happily urged by the apostle, as it was the Roman custom not to judge a prisoner on any charge unless the accusers were present. Paul urges that *his* accusers really were not the Sanhedrim nor the Jews then in court, but certain foreign pilgrims from Ephesus (Asia). These we hear nothing of now; they had doubtless tarried behind in Jerusalem, or had already set out on their return journey.

Ver. 20. **Or else let these same here say if they have found any evil doing in me, while I stood before the council.** Paul well knew that the Sanhedrim had no proof at all that he had committed any of the crimes alleged against him. The *first* charge, 'sedition,' was merely on hearsay evidence, the offspring of vague reports from a distance. The *second* charge, that he was an introducer of strange gods, the teacher of an unlawful religion, he had clearly disproved, having shown that to all intents and purposes he was an earnest and devout Jew. The *third* and gravest of the three charges the Sanhedrim had only cognisance of second hand. The alleged profanation of the temple, which Paul indignantly denied, was borne testimony to by witnesses *none of whom were present in Casarea*. No; there was only *one* true explanation of the wrath of the moving spirits in the great Jewish council. With that he proceeds to deal.

Ver. 21. **Except it be for this one voice, that I cried standing among them, Touching the resurrection of the dead I am called in question by you this day.** Paul well knew that many in the Sanhedrim, and the majority in the nation, would sympathise with him *here*. These words of his, he was aware, had been the occasion of a violent dissension in the great council; but he knew, with reference to his views and teaching on this all-important doctrine, the heart of the people of Israel was on his side. Wordsworth well summarizes this masterly defence of Paul:—'They have charged *me* with profaning the temple. But the fact is, I came from a distance to Jerusalem to *worship* in the temple; and to bring *alms* of charity, and also *offerings* of piety, as a Nazarite; and they themselves found me in the temple, engaged in a holy service, proving my respect for the temple; and they who accuse *me* of profaning it were guilty of profanation, in abetting those who seized me when there employed in a religious act, of which they prevented the completion.'

*Paul is remanded, and remains imprisoned at Casarea, 22, 23.*

Ver. 22. **And when Felix heard these things, having more perfect knowledge of that way, he deferred them, and said, When Lysias the chief captain shall come down, I will know the uttermost of your matter.** There is little doubt but that Felix would have liberated the prisoner after hearing his defence, had not the same motives—fear of the Jews—influenced him at this juncture which induced him two years later, when he was removed from his office, still to leave Paul bound. The tyrannical, venal magistrate had too good reason to dread the enmity of the people over whom he was placed as a governor, and hoped by

such weak concessions to prevent complaints being lodged against him at Rome. The procurator, after hearing publicly the accusation and the prisoner's defence, as he could not possibly gratify the powerful Jewish party by condemning him, endeavoured to conciliate them by remanding the prisoner until such time when he should obtain further details respecting the case. Felix was by no means ignorant of the Nazarene's story. During the years he had held office in Judæa and Samaria, he must have had frequent opportunities of becoming acquainted with many of the tenets of the rapidly growing brotherhood, and must, too, have seen sufficient of their lives to convince himself that the peace of the Empire was not likely to be endangered by any plots they would devise. At Casarea, his present residence, under his very eyes, lived one of the oldest and most venerated Nazarene leaders—Philip the deacon and evangelist. Round this eminent and devoted man, in the last quarter of a century, doubtless had gathered a large and influential Christian community, which included such men even as the Roman centurion Cornelius. From his Jewish wife, the Princess Drusilla, and her followers and friends, the procurator could hardly fail to have heard frequently of the Christian or Nazarene community growing up in the midst of the 'chosen people.' He therefore may well be said to possess 'a more perfect knowledge of that way' than men like the advocate Tertullus supposed. Here, as in chap. ix. 2, xix. 9 and 23, xxii. 4, occurs the famous term which, in the early days of the faith, was evidently used familiarly as a synonym for the disciples of Christ—'the way.' We have discussed the expression, and suggested how it probably first originated in the words of the Master, when He spoke of Himself as the 'Way,' as He was also 'the Truth and the Life;' while in those first struggling years the term 'Christian' was obviously refused to the brotherhood of the Lord Jesus by the unbelieving Jews, and the title 'Nazarene' was scornfully used by them as a name of reproach. The 'way,' *that* 'way,' was not unlikely a common designation among themselves and the Jews, as implying on the one hand no doctrinal assertions respecting Messiah, or on the other hand as conveying no reproach. Of Lysias the chief captain, and his coming down, we hear nothing further. It was evidently a courteous meaningless expression of Felix, and nothing more. He had heard the story from both sides, and was well acquainted with the so-called Nazarene sect, and required no further information of Paul's innocence of the charge alleged; he was evidently fully convinced, but it suited his purposes to detain him in captivity.

Ver. 23. **And he commanded a centurion to keep Paul, and to let him have liberty, and that he should forbid none of his acquaintance to minister or come unto him.** There were three descriptions of imprisonment or custody among the Romans—(1) Imprisonment in the common prison, *custodia publica*. We have an instance of this at Philippi, when Paul and Silas were arrested there. (2) Military arrest, *custodia militaris*, when the prisoner was bound or chained to the soldier who guarded him. This appears to have been the form of captivity to which the apostle was relegated during his long Roman confinement. (3) Free custody, *custodia libera*. In this last the arrested was usually released on bail. In some cases the accused, if an illustrious



person, was entrusted to the care of a magistrate. Paul remained at Cæsarea evidently under military arrest, the conditions of which were clearly relaxed,—the word rendered 'indulgence' (*ἐκείνη*) plainly indicates this,—though watched by a soldier, and possibly chained to him. Free access to him was also accorded to his friends. An ulterior motive, which we shall notice presently, seems to have suggested this last relaxation in the case of persons wishing to visit him.

*Paul's Interviews during his long Imprisonment at Cæsarea with the Procurator Felix and his wife, the Princess Drusilla, 24-27.*

Ver. 24. **And after certain days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, which was a Jewess.** The Princess Drusilla occupied no unimportant position among the women of the middle of the first century of the Christian era. She was the daughter of Herod Agrippa I., who ended a brilliant and showy life in that miserable way at Cæsarea depicted in the twelfth chapter of these 'Acts,' and sister to Herod Agrippa II. and the still more notorious Princess Bernice. Her name Drusilla—borne also by a sister of Caligula, the emperor with whom these younger 'Herods' were closely intimate—is a diminutive of Drusus. Endowed, like her sister Bernice, whose name was a name of shame even in the careless and profligate Roman society of that age, with the often dangerous gift of extreme beauty, she was married at a very early age to Azizus, king of Emesa, who became a proselyte, but left him, and still very young was married again to the Procurator Felix. Their son Agrippa perished, Josephus relates, in an eruption of Mount Vesuvius. Dr. Plumptre has made an interesting suggestion to account for the special interest this dissolute princess evidently felt in the case of the accused Christian prisoner Paul. She must have heard of the death of James and of the imprisonment of Peter in her girlhood; and she may have connected her father's tragic end at the games of Cæsarea with the part he had taken in persecuting the very sect to which the prisoner now in custody in her husband's palace belonged. She evidently showed, from being present with Felix at one, probably at more of the examinations, that she was desirous of hearing more of that 'way' with which her royal house had been mysteriously brought into contact.

Ver. 25. **And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled.** The subjects upon which Paul seems to have spoken when summoned before Felix and Drusilla, on first thoughts appear to us somewhat strange. No doubt they were very different to the themes the governor and his wife expected to have heard dwelt upon by the imprisoned Nazarene leader, he hoping probably, as a politician, to learn more of the relations existing between the sect in which Paul was so distinguished a leader, and the dominant Jewish schools of thought; and the Jewish princess expecting doubtless to hear from the lips of the Christian preacher something of the teaching, and perhaps new details respecting the death, of the Founder of his faith. One in the position of Drusilla had, too, no doubt heard strange rumours of the visions of Paul. She would hear from his own lips what had convinced one who, in early life, had been so famous a Pharisee—what had determined a man with the bright onlooks of the young Saul to

throw in his lot with a despised and persecuted sect.

But both Felix and Drusilla were disappointed. The Christian teacher apparently never touched on the 'evidences of his faith,' said nothing of his own life—nothing in connection with his own experience of shame at the hands of men, or of surpassing glory at the hands of God. With that marvellous power none seem to have been possessed like the inspired Paul, he spoke of 'life' rather than of 'doctrine,' with evidently special reference to the brilliant but mistaken lives of the pair who, surrounded with all the majesty of the ensign of the great Empire, sat in royal state, while he stood a friendless, poor-clad prisoner before them.

It is doubtful if many besides the personal attendants were present at this hearing or hearings of the accused. Most likely Paul gave Luke a very short description of what took place. The three famous words rendered 'righteousness,' 'temperance,' and 'judgment to come,' were without doubt Paul's own expressions. Luke took them down from his master's lips. Our English translation very poorly represents the Greek original 'of righteousness' (*ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ*) or 'justice,' a word embracing those varied duties which every upright citizen owes to another, how much more one set over his fellows as a judge! Such a reminder, couched in the burning words of a Paul, must indeed have struck home to the heart of the unscrupulous covetous Roman satrap, who only looked upon his high office as a source of gain to himself. 'Temperance,' *ἐν ἡμέλει* is very inadequately Englished by 'temperance.' The Greek word has a far broader significance; it denotes especially 'self-control,' the power of conquering one's own passions and lusts. The virtue was not unknown even in the story of Pagan Rome; and Felix' companion, the Jewess Drusilla, would call up before her mind many a fair example set by noble Hebrew matrons in the old days of Israel, an example *she* had never tried to follow! 'Judgment to come.' No doubt this theme was especially brought into prominence owing to the fact of the 'resurrection of the dead,' both of the just and unjust, forming so central a feature in Paul's teaching, and also because it was the subject of part of his defence when he was tried before the Sanhedrim, and before Felix (ver. 15, and chap. xxiii. 6, 8). We can picture Paul's oratory on these momentous occasions, speaking his Master's words before two such perfect representatives of the old world—the man, the heir of Pagan tradition, the unjust judge, the selfish ruler, the evil example to all that luxurious society in which he reigned as chief, living for the day, utterly careless of the future—thoroughly and earnestly carrying out the Pagan teachers' cheerless advice, 'Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die.' The woman, a fair specimen of the Jewess of the last age of Jerusalem, when the people loved with a strange passionate fervour the doctrine and ritual of Moses and his interpreters, but allowed neither doctrine nor ritual to touch or affect the inner life. The characters of Caiaphas and Annas, and of the sisters Drusilla and Bernice, were the natural outcome of the teaching of the Rabbinic schools so sternly condemned by the Lord Jesus.

We can well imagine from what armoury Paul had drawn those weapons which pierced the triple-guarded breast of the selfish and courtly

Roman voluptuary, and left him quivering with a nameless terror. No doubt among those precious parchments we read of in his last sad words to Timothy not many years later (2 Tim. iv. 13), were records written by the older apostles, men who had been with the Lord during the days of His earthly teaching—memories of the Divine words uttered in those solemn hours of communion, and many of which we now possess, most precious gems, set in the gold of the gospel setting. No doubt, too, in his frequent intercourse in past years with Barnabas, with men like Philip, in his rarer meetings with the holy Twelve, had Paul heard, not once nor twice, the treasured words of Jesus, the Master's solemn teaching as to the true meaning of righteousness, the glorious beauty of chastity and self-conquest, His many-coloured pictures of the awful judgment morning. And when, moved by the Holy Spirit, he repeated to the Roman governor these words of the Risen One, whom he (Paul) had beheld, not as the others had seen Him in His poor earth dress, but once more clothed with His glory robes, and girt with the light of heaven, Felix, trained in a school which taught its scholars to believe in nothing, to hope for nothing, to dread nothing—Felix the Epicurean, the atheist, the selfish scoffer at truth and honour, at innocence and purity, as he listened to the Nazarene's definition of justice and self-conquest, as he gazed on his picture of the future judgment of the just and the unjust, with Drusilla the Herodian princess by his side—Felix, we read, trembled.

And answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season I will call for thee. But the alarm caused by Paul's burning words of truth had no permanent effect, at least not then; the only effect they appear to have had was, that he sent away Paul. 'He does not resent,' well writes a recent commentator, 'his plainness of speech; he shows a certain measure of respect for him; but he postpones acting till a more convenient season, and so becomes a type of the millions whose spiritual life is ruined by a like procrastination. Nothing that we know of him gives us any ground for thinking that the *convenient season* ever came.' Singularly enough, after two years, Felix, accused by the Jewish people, was summoned to Rome to give an account of his Judæan stewardship to the emperor. Thus, by the providence of God, he was once more in the same city with Paul. Did he then avail himself of that 'convenient season'? The recording angel alone knows.

Ver. 26. He hoped also that money should have been given him of Paul, that he might loose him: wherefore he sent for him the oftener, and communed with him. The greed and rapacity of so many of these great lieutenants of the Cæsar in distant provinces of the Empire, is well exemplified in this episode in the government of the Procurator Felix. These men looked upon the great trusts committed to their charge as simply mines of wealth for them to work as best they could for their own advantage. Anything could be purchased at their hands, even immunity from the penalties of crime. What a picture of provincial government in the days of the early Cæsars! The sacred historian by no means painted for us here the darkest picture we possess of these venal governors; for instance, Josephus tells us of one Albinus, a successor of Felix in Judæa, who, on his departure from the province, freed all those

prisoners who gave him money; by which means, as the historian quaintly remarks, the prisons were certainly emptied, but the country was filled with robbers (see also Tacitus and Suetonius, who give us similar accounts of these corrupt and selfish rulers). So common an offence did this receiving bribes from a prisoner or his friends appear to be among the higher officials of the Empire, that a special law was framed, expressly forbidding a judge to receive pay in any form for the arrest, acquittal, or condemnation of any individual ('*Lex Julia de repetundis*'). There is no doubt that, in the case of the apostle, the Roman governor had heard with interest that the special object of Paul's journey to Jerusalem on this occasion was the distribution among the Jewish poor of sums of money collected in Macedonia and Achaia. This led the rapacious procurator to suspect that the prisoner, if not a wealthy man himself, had the command over considerable amounts. He was also well aware of the devoted love which existed between the members of this strange new sect, and had heard that Paul was one of their most distinguished leaders; these circumstances gave him good ground for hoping a substantial bribe would in the end be offered for the life and liberty of the accused.

In after times this offering money by way of a bribe to the Roman officials, to procure liberty to live as a Christian, or in the event of arrest and imprisonment to secure an acquittal, was no uncommon occurrence. Some century and a half later, Tertullian in North Africa, when deploring this custom, reminds his readers how Paul behaved when in danger and in prison, when a gift of money to his unrighteous judge would have saved him (*De Fuga in Persecutione*; see also Cyprian of Carthage's remarks in his Epistle (third century) denouncing the 'Libellatici,' those who purchased permission to be Christians).

Ver. 27. But after two years. It was in the summer or autumn of A.D. 60 that Felix was recalled to Rome. Two years he seems to have been from time to time in company with St. Paul; but the words of the apostle, as far as we know, made no impression on that cold, hard heart. Did they, in the providence of God, meet again in Rome? On the 'two years,' Wordsworth strikingly comments: 'Even Felix had two full years of God's long-suffering; "Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it: And if it bear fruit, well; and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down"' (Luke xiii. 8, 9).

Porcius Festus came into Felix' room. We know nothing of the previous history of the procurator, whose memory has been preserved owing to his meeting with Paul, whom he found languishing a prisoner in Cæsarea. Neither Tacitus nor Suetonius mention him in their histories. Josephus, however, tells us that he governed his stormy province with a wise, firm rule, putting down the Sicarii (assassins), and other predatory companies, who were then harassing Judæa. The Jewish historian finds no fault with this Festus: he seems to have been both just and upright. His rule was unfortunately prematurely cut short by death, before he had completed his second year of office. He was succeeded by Albinus, another corrupt and evil governor (A.D. 62).

And Felix, willing to show the Jews a

pleasure, left Paul bound. Felix was recalled owing to grave complaints made against him at headquarters. He was only acquitted through the influence of his brother Pallas at the imperial court of Rome. Leaving his province, then, under a cloud, he was base enough to endeavour to conciliate his enemies among the Jews, by leaving behind him in their power an innocent man whom he knew they hated. The conduct of Felix in this matter was followed by Albinus, who, two years later, filled Felix' office. When he heard that Gessius Florus had been appointed to succeed him, in order to conciliate the Jews, he liberated most of the state prisoners at Jerusalem (Josephus, *Antiquities*).

It has been asked, How was it allowed by the overruling providence of the Most High, that, in the busy, successful life of the apostle, two years at this most eventful period of the early Church's history should have been thus spent by St. Paul in seclusion at Cæsarea? At Rome, during the long captivity, there was the great and growing church to influence and to assist in organising; but what was there to do at Cæsarea, a comparatively unimportant military station, where surely the presence of an apostolical man like Philip was amply sufficient for the work there? It is at first thought strange, too, that none of the 'Pauline Epistles' appear to have been written during the long Cæsarean captivity.

Now, on several occasions in his writings, Paul makes mention of 'My Gospel.' Several of the most venerated of the fathers (Irenæus, Origen, Jerome) tell us Paul was accustomed to mention the *Gospel of Luke* as a work written by him. Is it not more than probable, that this pause in his life's restless labours was used by him to re-cast—possibly to set in order, and to add to—'memories' which he had already collected of the 'Life of Lives,'—'memories' which he had already frequently used in his preaching and teaching. Where could a more favourable spot be found than Cæsarea?—than that quiet prison there, to which we are aware his friends had ready access? Philip, we know, lived at Cæsarea; it was, besides, near the Holy City, in the vicinity too of those places made for ever sacred by the presence and acts of the Master. May we not in all reverence suggest, that *there*,—in that prison-room of the palace of Herod and Felix, with an impassive Roman legionary (perhaps chained to him) watching him, and listening puzzled and wondering,—the Virgin Mother herself, under the guardianship of the beloved apostle, came and visited the famous servant of her Divine Son, and dictated to him, for his Gospel, that wondrous story in the picturesque Aramaic-coloured Greek so different to the other chapters, which forms the introduction (chap. i. 5-80 and ii.) to what we call the 'Gospel according to St. Luke'?

## CHAPTER XXV.

*Paul's Defence before the Governor Festus—He appeals to the Cæsar at Rome—King Agrippa and Bernice wish to hear him.*

- 1 **N**OW when Festus was come into the <sup>a</sup> province, <sup>b</sup> after three days he <sup>c</sup> ascended <sup>d</sup> from Cæsarea to Jerusalem.
- 2 Then <sup>e</sup> the high priest <sup>f</sup> and <sup>g</sup> the chief of the Jews <sup>h</sup> informed him against Paul, and besought him, And desired favour against him, that he would send for him to Jerusalem, <sup>i</sup> laying wait in
- 4 the way to kill him. But Festus answered, that Paul should be kept at <sup>j</sup> Cæsarea, <sup>k</sup> and that he himself would depart shortly
- 5 *thither*. Let them therefore, said he, which among you are <sup>l</sup> able, go down with *me*, and accuse this man, if there be any
- 6 *wickedness* in him. And when he had tarried among them more than ten days, <sup>m</sup> he <sup>n</sup> went down unto Cæsarea; and the next day sitting in <sup>o</sup> the judgment seat, commanded Paul to be
- 7 brought. And when he was come, the Jews which <sup>p</sup> came down from Jerusalem stood round about, and laid many and grievous complaints against Paul, <sup>q</sup> <sup>r</sup> which they could not

<sup>a</sup> Ch. xxiii. 34

<sup>b</sup> Ch. xxviii.

<sup>c</sup> 17.

<sup>d</sup> Ver. 9 (Gk.).

<sup>e</sup> See i. u. ii. 4.

<sup>f</sup> Cp. ch. xxiv.

<sup>g</sup> 17.

<sup>h</sup> Vers. 4, 6, 13.

<sup>i</sup> See ch. viii.

<sup>j</sup> 40.

<sup>k</sup> Ch. xxiv. 1.

<sup>l</sup> See Mk. vi.

<sup>m</sup> 21.

<sup>n</sup> Ch. xxiv. 1;

<sup>o</sup> ver. 15. See

<sup>p</sup> ch. xxiii. 15.

<sup>q</sup> So ch. xxiii.

<sup>r</sup> 12-15. See

<sup>s</sup> ch. ix. 24.

<sup>t</sup> As Lu. xiv.

<sup>u</sup> 31; ch. xi.

<sup>v</sup> 17; or as

<sup>w</sup> 1 Cor. i. 26;

<sup>x</sup> Rev. vi. 15?

<sup>y</sup> Ch. xxiv. 1

<sup>z</sup> (Gk.).

<sup>aa</sup> Vers. 10, 17.

<sup>ab</sup> See Mat.

<sup>ac</sup> xxvii. 19.

<sup>ad</sup> So ch. xxiv.

<sup>ae</sup> 5, 13.

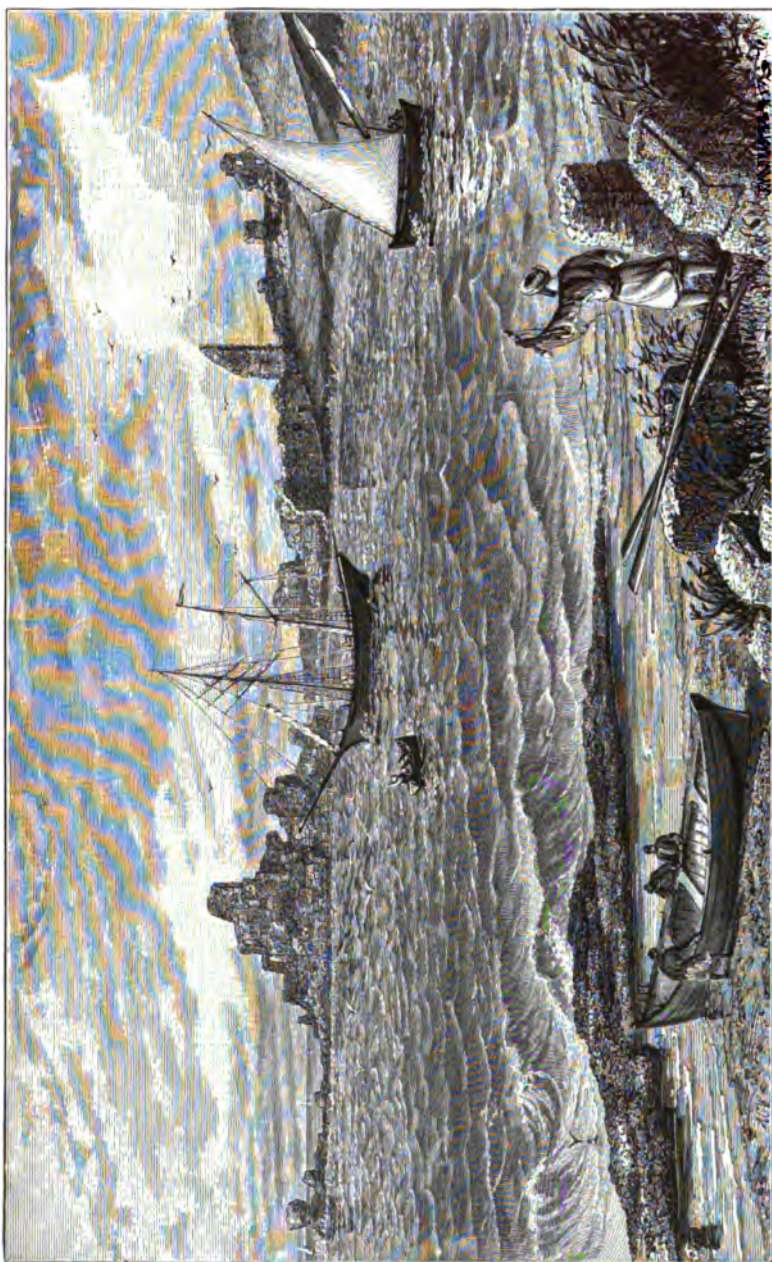
<sup>1</sup> better, 'went up.'

<sup>2</sup> The older authorities read here, 'the chief priests.'

<sup>3</sup> better rendered, 'that Paul was kept at Cæsarea.'

<sup>4</sup> The older authorities read here, 'not more than eight or ten days.'

<sup>5</sup> The majority of the older authorities omit 'Paul;' render, 'bringing against him many,' etc.



*From photographs.*

**CESAREA ON THE SEA.**



- 8 "prove: While he<sup>6</sup> answered for himself, Neither against  
the law of the Jews, neither against the temple, nor yet against  
9 Cæsar, have I offended any *thing at all*. But Festus,<sup>7</sup> willing  
to do the Jews a pleasure,<sup>8</sup> answered Paul, and said, "Wilt thou  
'go up to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these *things* before  
10 me? Then said Paul, I stand at Cæsar's judgment seat,  
where I ought to be judged: to the Jews have I done no  
11 wrong, as thou very well knowest. 'For if I be an offender,  
or have committed any *thing* worthy of death, I refuse not to  
die: but if there be none of these *things* whereof these accuse  
me, no man may deliver me unto them. 'I appeal unto  
12 Cæsar. Then Festus, when he had conferred with the council,  
answered, Hast thou appealed unto Cæsar?<sup>9</sup> unto Cæsar shalt  
thou go.
- 13 And after certain days king Agrippa and Bernice came unto  
14 Cæsarea to salute Festus. And when they had been there  
many days, Festus declared Paul's cause unto the king, say-  
15 ing, "There is a certain man left in bonds<sup>9</sup> by Felix: 'About  
whom, when I was at Jerusalem, the chief priests and the elders  
of the Jews informed me, desiring to have judgment against  
16 him. 'To whom I answered, It is not the manner of the  
Romans to deliver any man to die,<sup>10</sup> before that he which is  
accused have the accusers face to face, and have licence to  
answer for himself concerning the crime laid against him.  
17 Therefore, when they were come hither, without any delay, 'on  
the morrow I sat on the judgment seat, and commanded the  
18 man to be brought forth. Against whom when the accusers  
stood up, they brought none accusation of such things as I  
19 supposed: 'But had certain questions against him of their own  
'superstition,<sup>11</sup> and of one Jesus, which was dead, whom Paul  
20 affirmed to be alive. And because I doubted of such manner  
of questions,<sup>12</sup> I asked him whether he would go to Jerusalem,  
21 and there be judged of these matters. But when Paul had  
'appealed to be reserved unto the hearing of Augustus, I com-  
22 manded him to be kept till I might send him to Cæsar. Then  
'Agrippa said unto Festus, I would also hear the man myself.  
To-morrow, said he, thou shalt hear him.
- 23 And on the morrow, when Agrippa was come, and Bernice,

\* Ch. ii. 22  
(Gk.).  
So ver. 16.  
See ch. xix.  
33.  
Ch. xxi. 28.  
xxiv. 12. So  
ch. xxviii. 17.  
Cp. ch. vi. 13.  
Ch. xxiv. 27  
Ver. 20.

So 2 Tim. i.  
18.  
See ver. 25.

Ver. 16:  
ch. iii. 14;  
xxvii. 24 in  
the Gk. See  
Lu. vii. 42.  
Vers. 12, 21,  
25; ch. xxvi.  
32, xxviii. 19.

Gal. ii. 2 in  
the Gk.  
Ch. xxiv. 27.  
Vers. 2-6.

Ch. xxiii. 30,  
xxiv. 19.  
See 2 Cor.  
x. 1.

Ver. 27  
(Gk.);  
Mat. xxvii.  
37; Mk. xv.  
26.  
So ch. xviii.  
15, xxiii. 29.  
So ch. xvii.  
22.  
Ver. 9.

See ch. ix.  
15.

Ver. 22.

<sup>6</sup> The older authorities insert 'Paul' before 'answered.'

<sup>7</sup> better rendered, 'wishing to win the favour of the Jews.'

<sup>8</sup> more accurately rendered, 'Thou hast appealed unto Cæsar; to Cæsar,' etc.

<sup>9</sup> literally, 'a prisoner.'

<sup>10</sup> The older authorities omit the words 'to die' (literally, 'unto destruction'); render then, 'It is not the practice of the Romans to give up any man.'

<sup>11</sup> better rendered, 'of their own religion.'

<sup>12</sup> The reading of the older authorities is slightly different; render thus, 'And as I was perplexed how to investigate these matters in dispute.'

with great pomp, and were entered into the place of hearing, with the <sup>4</sup> chief captains, and principal men of the city, at <sup>4</sup> Mk. vi. 22 (Gk.).

24 Festus' commandment Paul was brought *forth*. And Festus said, King Agrippa, and all men which are here present with us, ye see this *man*, about whom <sup>4</sup> all the multitude of the Jews <sup>1</sup> Vers. 2, 7. have <sup>4</sup> dealt with me, both at Jerusalem, and *also* here, crying <sup>4</sup> See Rom. xi. 2. <sup>1</sup> So ch. xxii. 22. <sup>4</sup> So ch. xxiii. 29, xxvi. 31. Cp. ch. xxiii. 9; ver. 11. <sup>4</sup> Vers. 21, 12.

25 that <sup>1</sup> he ought not to live any longer. But when I found that <sup>4</sup> he had committed nothing worthy of death, <sup>4</sup> and *that* he himself hath <sup>4</sup> appealed <sup>13</sup> to Augustus, I have determined to

26 send him. Of whom I have no certain *thing* to write unto my lord. Wherefore I have brought him forth before you, and specially before thee, O king Agrippa, that, after examination

27 had, I might have somewhat to write. For it seemeth to me unreasonable to send <sup>14</sup> a prisoner, and not withal to signify the <sup>4</sup> crimes *laid* against him.

<sup>13</sup> *better*, 'and as he himself appealed,' etc.

<sup>14</sup> *better*, 'in sending a prisoner.'

*Festus succeeds Felix as Procurator of Judæa—The Jews in vain try to induce him to bring Paul to Jerusalem—Festus examines Paul in person, who appeals from his Tribunal to that of the Cæsar at Rome, 1-12.*

Ver. 1. Now when Festus was come into the province. The Greek word translated 'province' is an unusual one in the case of a division of one of the greater provincial governments: *ἡγεμονία*. The term we find here was perhaps used in consequence of the importance of Judæa at that time, although it was only reckoned as a part of the imperial province of Syria. The proprætor or proconsul ruled over the greater province, the procurator over the smaller division.

Ver. 2. Then the high priest and the chief of the Jews informed him against Paul. Directly after his arrival at the seat of his new government, the procurator went up to the real capital of the province, Jerusalem, to become in some way acquainted with the national chiefs of that strange nation over whom he was placed. The majority of the older MSS., instead of 'high priest' read here 'chief priests,' including the 'chiefs of the priestly courses,' and not improbably those who had for a longer or shorter period filled the office themselves of high priest. If the reading 'high priest' be correct, the name of this high official here referred to would be Ismael the son of Plato, who had very recently been appointed to that dignity by Herod Agrippa II., in succession to that Ananias of whom we read when Paul was arrested and brought before the Sanhedrim, on the occasion when he addressed him as 'Thou whitened wall' (Acts xxiii. 3). 'The chief of the Jews' is a general expression signifying the most eminent and influential men in the nation. Several of these would naturally have a seat in the Sanhedrim; but this 'information against Paul,' and request that he should be tried by a Jewish tribunal, evidently proceeded from a broader area among the people than would be covered were the reference confined to the supreme council of the Sanhedrim.

The representation to Festus was evidently made as one in which the nation generally was interested. It is clear that, owing to the machinations of his sleepless enemies, a very strong hostile feeling to the great Gentile apostle had sprung up, of which this 'information' and 'petition' to the new procurator was the result.

Ver. 3. And desired favour against him, that he would send for him unto Jerusalem. In vers. 15, 16, Festus relates the particulars of this request of the Jews to King Agrippa. From the detailed account, it seems that two formal requests were made to him by the priests and influential men at Jerusalem—the first was that he should pronounce a condemnatory judgment against the prisoner Paul, who some two years before had been accused of sedition and other charges before Felix; and then, when this request was refused, on the ground that such a condemnation would be contrary to Roman procedure, they asked that the prisoner Paul might be formally tried before their national tribunal, as the crimes alleged against him had mainly to do with their sacred customs and laws.

Laying wait in the way to kill him. This was the real point of their request. Failing to persuade the Roman governor to condemn Paul, they determined, if they could induce him to send the prisoner up from Cæsarea to Jerusalem, to lay an ambushade and to assassinate the hated Nazarene teacher. Such a shocking design could only have been deliberately planned by men of position and political weight in such a lawless age as that which immediately preceded the fatal Jewish rebellion against Rome, which terminated with the fall of the city, and the break-up of the nation. No doubt, when the request was urged, the band of Sicarii (assassins) was already hired, and the very place where the murder was to be carried out fixed upon. Josephus, their own historian, tells us how at this time the chief priests and the leading men in the nation were men who, for the most part, were infamous for their wickedness.

Ver. 4. But Festus answered, that Paul should be kept at Cæsarea, and that he himself would



**depart shortly thither.** The original Greek here somewhat changes the character of the governor's reply to the Jewish national party. In the English the words are somewhat curt and abrupt. In the Greek, they are perfectly courteous, and even conciliatory. 'But Festus answered that Paul was kept' (not 'should be kept'), that is to say, as he was in prison then, and that as he, Festus, was on the point of going down to Cæsarea himself, it was not worth while to bring the prisoner up to Jerusalem now.

**Ver. 5. Let them therefore, said he, which among you are able, go down with me.** Bengel suggests that the expression, 'which among you are able,' signifies 'those among you which are able to perform the journey.' It is better, however, to understand the meaning to be 'those among you which are invested with official authority.' This best reproduces the force of the Greek words *oi dunatoi*. Festus, in his natural desire to gratify the influential persons of the nation over whom he was placed, never forgot that the accused was a Roman citizen.

**And accuse this man, if there be any wickedness in him.** The older mss. read only, 'if there be anything in him;' in other words, if there be any real grounds upon which he, as a Roman, ought to be again formally tried.

**Ver. 7. And when he was come, the Jews which came down from Jerusalem stood round about, and laid many and grievous complaints against Paul, which they could not prove.** As Festus had signified (see ver. 4), he speedily went down again to Cæsarea; and without any loss of time, on the day following his return, he summoned Paul before him. His enemies in the meantime had also arrived, and they seem to have gathered round the prisoner in the judgment-hall in a menacing manner, probably hoping to intimidate him. Without doubt the many grievous complaints alleged included the 'profanation of the temple,' but other points seem to have been urged which they were unable to prove. Treason against the state, of course, was the basis of these new charges. The Thessalonian outbreak and the old charge that the apostle had been teaching that allegiance was due to another king than Cæsar (Acts xvii. 6-8), were raked up, perhaps this time with witnesses; but all these things were untrue and unreal, and the Roman saw through the attempt, and listened and evidently believed Paul's denial of any treasonable designs against the emperor. But in spite of his conviction of the prisoner's innocence of what he naturally deemed the graver charge, he seems to have felt that in some way or another the accused had transgressed some of the regulations and laws of his own strange people, and that it would be well if he would agree (he never forgot the prisoner was a citizen of Rome) to be handed over to the national Jewish courts.

**Ver. 8. While he answered for himself.** No doubt repeating in the main the arguments briefly reported in the first trial before the Procurator Felix (chap. xxiv. 10-21), adding, probably, an indignant denial, and one that convinced his judge respecting the alleged treason against the emperor and the state.

Some years later, perhaps five or six, it was upon this accusation of treason that Paul's enemies no doubt finally compassed their purpose. They contrived, it has been surmised, in some way to

weave round the apostle a network of suspicion that he had been connected with the disastrous fire of Rome—the fire falsely ascribed to the persecuted Christians of the imperial city. He was re-arrested, we know, in that short period of activity and missionary labour which succeeded his liberation from the Roman imprisonment, as far as we can gather, on no mere Jewish accusation of transgression against the Mosaic law and the traditional ordinances of his race. Graver charges, no doubt, were alleged. It was not a difficult matter, in those days which followed the persecution after the great fire, to bring about the condemnation of one of the hated Nazarenes, especially of one so distinguished as the great Paul, the loved and hated. The second imprisonment at Rome, we learn from his own words to Timothy (Second Epistle), was close and rigorous in character. The brave, generous teacher wrote hopeless of life, though full of joy and hope as to his future, but not here, not with his disciples and his friends. After his Second Epistle to Timothy, over the apostle's life and work there falls a great hush, which tells too surely its own story. We hardly need the universal tradition of the Church to tell us what the end was.

**Ver. 9. But Festus, willing to do the Jews a pleasure, answered Paul, and said, Wilt thou go up to Jerusalem, and there be judged of those things before me?** This was a very natural proposal of the Roman governor. He felt clearly that there was no sufficient evidence to prove the charge of treason or sedition, which was really all he, as an official of the Empire, had to take cognisance of; but he wished to be popular with the leading men of his province, so he publicly asked the prisoner if he did not think it better for him to have those charges, which exclusively related to Jewish customs and laws, investigated before an ecclesiastical tribunal like the Sanhedrim, he, the procurator, promising to be present and to hear the accusation and the defence. It is not unlikely that Festus anticipated what the reply of Paul to his proposition would be, but he wished that the odium of declining to submit to the Sanhedrim jurisdiction should be thrown on Paul, who, as Festus knew well, could plead if he chose his privileges as a citizen of Rome. As far as he was concerned, the Jewish notables would be able to see that no obstacles were thrown by him in the way of their carrying out their customs and rights.

**Ver. 10. Then said Paul, I stand at Cæsar's judgment seat.** And the prisoner's reply was decisive. Paul felt that there was no hope of justice for him if he pleaded before the Sanhedrim. Perhaps he was conscious that, if he yielded, he would never stand before that august council at all; for, remembering the murderous plot he had escaped two years before, he feared the Jews, who hated him with so fierce a hate, would never suffer him to reach Jerusalem in safety. It is not improbable that he had even received warnings of the lying in wait mentioned in ver. 3. The procurator was the representative of the Cæsar at Rome, and the eagle of Rome was engraved on the judge's tribunal, who pronounced sentence in the name of the reigning emperor. Syria, of which great government Judæa was a subdivision, was an imperial province, under the direct rule of the emperor. There were two kinds of provinces in the Empire—some under the nominal rule of



the consuls: these were termed senatorial; some under the direct military supervision of the Cæsar: these were termed imperial. Syria, and therefore Judæa, belonged to this latter class. Tacitus, in his *Annals*, tells us how Nero, who was then on the throne, had published an edict which directed that Italy and the public (senatorial) provinces should address themselves to the tribunal of the consuls, and have access to the senate, but that he himself would provide for the provinces and the armies committed to the emperor.

To the Jews have I done no wrong, as thou very well knowest. Literally, 'as thou knowest too well,' or 'as thou knowest better' (the Greek word in the original is a comparative) 'than thou allowest.' The apostle's meaning was: 'My offence, if I have committed an offence, is against the Majesty of the Cæsar. Let him judge me, and punish me if I am really guilty. As regards the Jews, you know too well I am perfectly innocent. Why should I waive then my rights as a Roman, and submit myself to their tribunal, which only takes cognisance of crimes which I never dreamt of committing?'

Ver. 11. *I appeal unto Cæsar.* This power of appealing to Rome was a valuable privilege of all Roman citizens, and a great safeguard against tyranny and oppression on the part of provincial magistrates. The 'appeal to Cæsar' (*provocatio*) existed under the form of an appeal to the people in Rome in early times; the Decemvirs suspended the right, but it was restored again after their deposition.

The Julian law forbade any unnecessary impediment being put in the way of a Roman citizen who had thus appealed. Some years later we read in the letters of the Proconsul Pliny how he sent to Rome, when Trajan was emperor, those Bithynian Christians who had appealed as Roman citizens to Cæsar. These appeals were heard in Rome by men of consular dignity specially appointed for this purpose. Thus Suetonius (*Augustus*) tells us that the Emperor Augustus assigned every year causes which came from the provinces to men of consular rank, to one of whom the business of each province was referred.

We may well suppose, too, that Paul's determination to appeal to Cæsar was strengthened, if not suggested, by this special promise he had received (see chap. xxiii. 11), that he should bear witness to the Lord Jesus in Rome before he died. It is likely that he felt that all these things—the bitter and ever-increasing hostility of the Jews, the disinclination of the Roman procurators in succession to cross the Sanhedrim and leading men of Jerusalem in their intense wish to get Paul into their own hands—were subservient to a plan determined in the counsels of the Most High, that he (Paul) should surely preach the gospel in Rome also. He would carry out, he thought, his Master's will, and at all risks, even though in chains, would bear his witness to the Crucified in the imperial city; so he cried, 'I appeal unto Cæsar.'

Ver. 12. *Then Festus, when he had conferred with the council.* The council here referred to was not the members of the Sanhedrim then present at Cæsarea, but certain officials whom Suetonius calls *consilarii*. These advisers or assessors were taken into counsel in questions of difficulty. Glogau refers to a similar case in the administration of Cumanus, when Josephus (*Antiquities*) tells us that the governor took counsel

with his friends before he put to death a Roman soldier who had wantonly destroyed the sacred books of the Jews; and to another like incident in the life of Cestius Gallus, the Proconsul of Syria, who, on receiving contradictory reports from Florus, the Procurator of Judæa, and the rulers of Jerusalem, concerning certain disturbances among the Jews, consulted with his principal men, that is, with his council (Josephus, *Wars of the Jews*). In the present case the point of discussion was, Should the appeal of Paul to Cæsar be allowed or not? If the accusation against the citizen appealing were perfectly clear, as in the case of a notorious malefactor or rebel, the request to be allowed to appeal might be refused by the Roman official presiding over the court. In the present instance, however, no fair ground of refusal occurred to Festus, who proceeded to signify his consent to Paul's request.

*Hast thou appealed unto Cæsar? unto Cæsar shalt thou go.* This reply of Festus to Paul, granting him, after consulting with his assessors, his request to be sent to Rome for trial, is not interrogative, as in the English Version. It simply expresses the decision of the court. Bengel sees in the curt phrase—evidently in the very words in which Festus addressed the apostle at the close of the hearing—an intention on the part of the speaker of alarming the prisoner, who had declined to comply with what was evidently the judge's wish—viz., to waive the right of his citizenship, and to consent to be judged by the Sanhedrim at Jerusalem. Without, perhaps, quite conceding this, we cannot help suspecting that over the procurator's face something like a smile of derision passed when he delivered his sentence: 'Well, you have appealed to Cæsar's court; to Cæsar's court you shall go,' Festus knowing well the reception, the weary delays and harsh treatment, such a prisoner would probably meet with at Rome.

*King Herod Agrippa II. and his Sister, the Queen Bernice, come down to Cæsarea to visit the new Roman Governor Festus, who tells the King about the strange accusation hanging over Paul the Nazarene, 13-21.*

Ver. 13. *And after certain days King Agrippa and Bernice came unto Cæsarea to salute Festus.* King Herod Agrippa II., son of Herod Agrippa I., who died so miserably at the Cæsarea festival, A.D. 44-45 (see chap. xii. 21-23), and great-grandson of Herod the Great, was the last of that famous line of Idumean princes, vassals of Rome, who played so distinguished a part in the story of Israel during the last fifty years of the existence of the Jews as a separate nationality. This Agrippa II. was only seventeen years old when his father the king died in the sudden manner above described (Acts xii.). The young prince was then at Rome, and was the intimate friend of the imperial family. Claudius, the emperor, had he not been dissuaded from his purpose by his freedmen and counsellors, would have at once appointed him to the royal succession in Judæa; but it was urged that he was too young to guide the destinies of that stormy province. So Cuspius Fadus was sent out as Procurator instead; but in about four years, when the young Agrippa was twenty-one years old, Claudius bestowed on him the principality of Chalcis, just then vacant owing to the death of his uncle Herod, king of that territory. With Chalcis, Claudius entrusted the young Agrippa with the presidency

of the Jerusalem temple, and the power of appointing at his pleasure the high priest. This was in A.D. 49, the eighth year of his (Claudius') reign. Later on, the emperor added to his friend's dominions the tetrarchy of Philip and Lysanias (see Luke iii. 1), and conferred on him the coveted title of king. Agrippa II., then a powerful subject monarch, fixed his residence at Cæsarea Philippi, which he enlarged greatly and beautified, and subsequently called it, in honour of the reigning emperor, Neronias. Nero, on his accession, had also shown much favour to the young Jewish sovereign, and had added to his dominions the city of Tiberias and part of Galilee.

Justice has hardly been done to this 'last of the Herods.' He had a difficult part to play in the stormy times which preceded the great catastrophe. He owed everything to Rome, and the reigning imperial family, and naturally was strongly attached to the Empire which had adopted him, and that family which seemed never weary of showing him kindness and consideration. This should surely be taken into account when his Roman tastes and leanings are unfavourably criticised. Josephus writes much of him, and generally in a hostile spirit; for instance, he relates how, during the procuratorship of this very Festus, he had a long and serious quarrel with the Jews about his palace at Jerusalem. They alleged he had built it so high as to overlook the temple and sanctuary. The majority of the Jews, indeed, seemed to have looked upon him, though wrongfully, as a kind of spy set over them by the hated imperial government. But all through the bloody, terrible war which ended in the total collapse and ruin of the Jewish nationality, King Agrippa seems to have acted well and nobly, endeavouring constantly to act the part of a mediator between the Jews, bent on their own destruction, and the haughty Roman claims; at times even, in his longing to bring about a peace, he risked his life.

He died at an advanced age, having survived the fall of the city and the destruction of his nation a great many years, apparently in the third year of the Emperor Trajan, A.D. 99.

His beautiful sister Bernice, who accompanied him on this memorable visit to Cæsarea to salute the new Procurator Festus, when they met the prisoner Paul and listened to one of his marvellous 'apologies' for Christianity and his own work, unfortunately has earned for herself a very different place in the gallery of historical portraits of the first age of our faith. Famous for her great beauty, and apparently her commanding talents, her history, even in that dissolute and wicked age, reads, to use the graphic words of Professor Plumptre, 'like a terrible romance or a page from the chronicles of the Borgias.' Married at an early age to her uncle, Herod, king of Chalcis, she was left a widow comparatively young, and then came to reside with her brother, Agrippa II., whose career we have sketched above. By this period of her life she had already acquired a wide-spread evil reputation. Attracted by her beauty and wealth, Polemo, king of Cilicia, adopted the Jewish religion and made her his wife. But the princess soon deserted him, and again returned to her brother. It was after the dissolution of the second marriage of the wanton queen with Polemo that the visit to Cæsarea to salute Festus was made, on which occasion Paul made the famous defence before the brother and sister related in the next (26th)

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chapter of these 'Acts,' A.D. 61-62. In the bitter quarrels which heralded the last terrible collision between the doomed Jewish nation and the Romans, Bernice played certainly a noble and heroic part, endeavouring, as did her brother King Agrippa II., to mediate between her countrymen and the Romans. On one occasion we read how, at the risk of her life, she stood barefoot and a suppliant before the tribunal of Festus the procurator, beseeching him to spare the rebel Jews.

During the last war, however, like her brother, she ranged herself on the Roman side. The Emperor Vespasian allowed himself to be much influenced by her persuasion and counsel, and grave suspicions were excited that a too close intimacy existed between the old emperor and the princess. But the strangest and most momentous page in her dark history was her connection and friendship with the son of Vespasian, the hero Titus, who brought Bernice with him to Rome, and is said to have promised to wed her, had not a storm of public indignation at the bare notion of such an alliance for the brilliant heir to the Empire induced him at the eleventh hour to dismiss her—as Suetonius (*Titus*) pithily puts it: 'Dimisit invitam.'

The salutation of Festus here alluded to was no doubt a formal visit of congratulation from the Jewish prince (one of whose offices was the superintendence of the Jerusalem temple) to the new procurator of Judæa, under whose supreme authority Agrippa to a certain extent was placed. It was also important for the vassal kings to be on terms of intimacy and close friendship with the powerful Roman lieutenant commanding in the provinces of which they were nominally the sovereigns.

Ver. 14. *Festus declared Paul's cause unto the king, saying, There is a certain man left in bonds by Felix.* It has been suggested that the reason of this communication on the part of Festus, was a desire to interest his visitor by bringing under the king's notice one who was bitterly and persistently attacked by the leading men of his nation—the Jews; but after all, it is simpler to suppose that the Roman governor was anxious to learn more of the strange man and those pretensions of his, which evidently excited among his more influential countrymen an intense hatred, in order that he might send to Rome with the prisoner who had appealed to the emperor's tribunal, a clear and definite story of the cause. At present there is no doubt that Festus was not a little mystified as to the whole matter, and he felt that from Agrippa he would be likely to get to the bottom of the reasons of the hatred of the high priest and Sanhedrim, and the seeming obstinacy of Paul.

Agrippa, besides, was not merely a Jew, as Festus considered, by birth and education, but was also the appointed guardian of the temple, which was the scene of one of the three crimes charged against the prisoner.

Ver. 15. *About whom the chief priests . . . informed me, desiring to have judgment against him.* The Greek word translated 'judgment' (*δίκη*), in the most trustworthy MSS. is the stronger though unused *κατάδικη*, which must possess the sense of 'condemnation' or 'punishment.' It would thus seem as though the Sanhedrim authorities had so represented the matter to Festus as to leave the impression on his mind that the trial before his predecessor had resulted in the prisoner having

been found guilty of at least some of the alleged crimes, but that condemnation had not been pronounced. This they now asked as a right at the hands of Festus.

Ver. 16. It is not the manner of the Romans to deliver any man to die, before that he which is accused have the accusers face to face, and have licence to answer for himself concerning the crime laid against him. The Jews had asked (ver. 3) only that the accused might be brought to Jerusalem, intending, as we know, to murder him on the way by the hands of a company of hired Sicarii (assassins) whom they had hired for this purpose. The words of Festus here to King Agrippa must then relate to another and a different request of the Jews, viz. that he would at once, without any further hearing, condemn Paul to death. Probably each of these requests had been made to the new procurator, and having failed in the first, they arranged the ambushade and asked that the trial might take place anew in Jerusalem, the scene of part of the crimes alleged.

The proud assertion which the Roman here makes to Agrippa, as far as we know, was justified in Festus' case, who was reported to have been a fair ruler and a just judge.

Ver. 18. Against whom, when the accusers stood up, they brought none accusations of such things as I supposed. The intensesness of feeling with which the Jews pressed Festus in the matter of the trial and condemnation of Paul, led the governor, when he heard the words 'treason' and 'sedition' mixed up with the case, to expect to find in the important prisoner some famous and well-known leader of Sicarii or Jewish rebels; but when he inquired more particularly into the details of the case, he found as regarded sedition or disloyalty to the Cæsar nothing but the vaguest rumours, and that the real points urged against him were connected with matters devoid of interest for a Roman brought up in the Materialistic school of his age. Festus, like another and still more eminent Roman official who appears in this history, 'cared for none of these things' (Acts xviii. 17).

Ver. 19. But had certain questions against him of their own superstition. The English word 'superstition,' like the adjective used in chap. xvii. 22, utterly fails to represent the Greek *δυσειδωρίας* here. This word is one which may be understood in a bad sense, viz. a 'superstition'; but it also signifies 'religion,' without a shade of disrespect or slight being intended to be conveyed. In neither of these two passages is it possible to suppose anything like sarcasm or discourtesy was intended (see note on chap. xvii. 22). Here the courtly Festus is speaking to an exalted personage known to be a zealous Jew; and although the religion of this strange people and all connected with it was a matter of utter indifference to this true representative of Rome, yet we may be sure he would never risk offending one like King Agrippa when he spoke of the religion of his countrymen with a word of contempt. Render then simply, 'Certain questions. . . of their own religion.'

And of one Jesus, which was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive. This allusion to the Messiah, the Lord Jesus, evidently tells us that in the former proceedings much had been said not recorded or even alluded to in these 'cts.' But here the procurator dismisses the apparent

point at issue between Paul and the Jews of the Sanhedrim, whether or no one Jesus was alive or dead, with contemptuous brevity. The strict, unfaltering accuracy of the writer of these 'Acts,' in recording at all such a scornful remark, is especially noteworthy. This reference of Festus to 'Jesus' here gives us some clue to Paul's line of argument when he spoke in defence of himself before the Sanhedrim at Jerusalem, and again before Felix at Cæsarea. The 'Acts' report is of the briefest, and fails to touch upon the inner line of thought of these 'apologies' of the great Gentile apostle. He evidently, on those occasions, by no means confined himself to the general doctrine of the resurrection taught in all the Pharisee schools in Jerusalem and elsewhere, but dwelt earnestly on the special connection of these doctrines with the resurrection of their loved Master, the Lord Jesus. His Master's resurrection, we know, was ever a central point of Paul's teaching.

Ver. 20. And because I doubted of such manner of questions, I asked him whether he would go to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these matters. Festus hardly represents here the whole truth. No doubt he did wish to be informed more fully concerning the real ground of the bitter enmity which existed between Paul and the Sanhedrim. He felt, whatever the grave point at issue was, it was one of the burning questions which was then agitating the unhappy and distracted province over which he had just been appointed ruler; and it behoved him as a wise politician to make himself acquainted as soon as possible with the varied details of this Christianity in which Paul was a leading spirit, and which was evidently so hateful to the ruling body among the Jews. This full information he felt he could only get at the centre of Jewish life, Jerusalem, the headquarters of their religion. It was therefore quite true to allege this desire of his to get perfect information as the reason which prompted him to wish to have the trial of Paul conducted by the Sanhedrim in the Holy City. But he kept in the background another powerful motive which had influenced him in his proposition to the apostle to remove the scene of trial, and to substitute Jewish for Roman forms of law in his case, viz. his own desire to acquire popularity among the Jews (see ver. 9).

Ver. 21. But when Paul had appealed to be reserved unto the hearing of Augustus, I commanded him to be kept till I might send him to Cæsar. There is evidently in Festus' words an under-current of a not unnatural displeasure at the appeal to Cæsar. He was not able to refuse permission to the 'citizen' Paul to appeal; still he felt it was somewhat of a slight thrown upon him, Festus, that a Roman citizen should prefer the imperial tribunal at Rome to his own. He could not help feeling, too, that it was his proposition to remove the trial to Jerusalem which had moved the prisoner to take this step. The Greek word translated 'Augustus' (*Ζεβσαρρῶν*) is an adjective signifying venerable (*venerandus*), and is the Greek equivalent for Augustus—a title of pre-eminent honour and dignity first given by the Roman senate to Octavianus (see Suetonius, *Augustus*). It is apparently connected with 'augur,' and possesses a religious signification. It soon became the royal title assumed by, rather than conferred on, the emperors. Cæsar, if we examine

the true meaning of the term, was in the first instance the family name answering to Plantagenet, Hohenzollern, Hapsburg, though it very soon, like Ptolemy in the royal Egyptian line, became a title of the chief magistrate of the Empire. Later in the story of Rome, Augustus was assumed as the designation of the older and superior; Cæsar, that of the younger and subordinate emperor. It is curious that of these two world-famous titles, while the higher, 'Augustus,' now belongs to the storied past, the lower and less distinguished has been adopted not by the Roman, but, singularly enough, by the Teutonic and Slavonic peoples, as the designation of their supreme magistrate, under the very slightly altered 'Kaiser' and 'Czar.' Plumptre calls attention to the memory of this name or title 'Augustus' being perpetuated in the month August, and in the names of the cities of Augsburg and Sebastopol.

I commanded him to be kept till I might send him to Cæsar. Thus intimating that he was only waiting for a fit opportunity to send the prisoner under a proper escort to Rome.

*King Agrippa II. expresses a Desire to hear Paul himself—The Apostle is brought before the King and his Sister and the Roman Festus, 22-27.*

Ver. 22. Then Agrippa said unto Festus, I would also hear the man myself. Literally, 'I was wishing' (ἠβούλημν). Agrippa must have heard often of Paul. Many and contradictory reports must oftentimes have been brought to this royal guardian of the temple—the last guardian!—some representing the great Nazarene preacher as unworthy to live, others extolling him as one of the noblest and most devoted of men. He had long been wishing to see him and hear him for himself. At length the opportunity offered itself.

Ver. 23. And on the morrow, when Agrippa was come, and Bernice, with great pomp. The account here reads as the description of one who had witnessed the events of that day so memorable in early Christian annals. The splendour of the procession and the glittering appearance of the court, crowded with those royal and princely personages and their retinue, Roman and Jewish guards, the Sanhedrim officials, the stately garb of the high priest and his fellows, the heads of the hierarchy of Israel, must have been very striking; all honour on this occasion was evidently shown to King Agrippa II., the last Jew who legally bore the proud royal title; the same city, some eighteen years before, had witnessed a still more stately scene, a pomp more truly royal, when the father of this king, Herod, was stricken by the angel of the Lord as a punishment for his pride, because, we read, 'he gave not God the glory' (Acts xii. 23). The word translated 'pomp' (φανασία), in Polybius, Plutarch, and later Greek writers, is frequently used in this sense. The earlier signification of the term was simply 'appearance,' a lively image in the mind, as it has been described.

With the chief captains. That is, the principal officers of the Roman garrison of Cæsarea, the headquarters of the army of Judæa. We have here one of the direct and perhaps one of the earliest fulfilments of the prophecy of the Lord Jesus to His servants, 'Ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them' (Matt. x. 18).

Ver. 24. King Agrippa . . . ye see this man, about whom all the multitude of the Jews have

dealt with me, both at Jerusalem, and also here, crying that he ought not to live any longer. The expression here, 'all the multitude,' is a strange one; but Festus believed, and with some reason, that the feeling against Paul among the Jews was a very general one. Certainly it existed to a great extent among the influential men who guided the destinies of the unhappy people in these last years of their existence as a nation. 'And all here' speaks for the unanimity of the Cæsarean Jews in this matter with their Jerusalem brethren. Of the words 'have dealt with me,' perhaps 'made petition to me' represent the meaning of the original Greek closer; another rendering suggested is, 'held communication with me.' It is a general and inclusive term, and comprehends the 'information and request' of vers. 2 and 3, and the judicial proceedings related in ver. 7.

Ver. 26. Of whom I have no certain thing to write unto my lord. It was the rule in these cases of appeal from the provincial magistrate to the supreme court at Rome, to transmit a detailed account of the crime alleged, and also a full report of any legal proceedings which had taken place in connection with it. Such a report was called 'literæ dimissoriæ.' Festus was thoroughly perplexed in the case of Paul. It is quite clear his own feelings led him to look on his prisoner as innocent, but the reiterated and urgent pressure for his condemnation on the part of the supreme council led him to suspect that there was more in the accusation than met the eye, and that only one conversant with the internal condition of the distracted country could possibly grasp the real significance of Paul's guilt. So, before writing his official report to send with the prisoner to the capital, Festus welcomes the assistance of one so well versed in Jewish religious and political matter as King Agrippa. The expression, 'to write unto my lord' (ἐν κυρίῳ), is a proof (one of very many) of the historical accuracy of the compiler of these 'Acts.' A few years earlier, such a title used to the Cæsar at Rome would have been a mistake. The earlier emperors, Augustus, Tiberius, and Nero, refused this appellation. Augustus, writes Suetonius (*Augustus*), always abhorred the title 'lord' as ill-omened. He would not even allow his children or grandchildren, in jest or earnest, so to address him. Even Tiberius was equally averse to the adulatory title, Caligula was the first, apparently, who permitted it. Herod Agrippa, we know, used it to Claudius; and from the time of Domitian it became a recognised portion of their ordinary appellation. Pliny addressed the Emperor Trajan as 'my lord Trajan.' We first find it on the coins of Antoninus Pius. It was henceforth customary to address the emperors as deities. Thus we read such sentences as this, 'Edictum Domini Deique nostri.'

I have brought him . . . specially before thee, O King Agrippa. Stier (*Words of the Apostles*) writes on this standing and pleading before Agrippa: 'Yet more and more complete must the giving of witness be in these parts before the martyr sets out for Rome. In Jerusalem the long-suffering of the Lord towards the rejecters of the gospel was now exhausted. In Antioch, where the president of Syria resided, the new mother Church of Jewish and Gentile Christians was flourishing; here in Cæsarea, the dwelling of the procurator (of Judæa), the testimony which had begun in the

house of Cornelius the centurion had now risen upward, till it comes before the brilliant assembly of all the local authorities, in the presence of the last king of the Jews.

Ver. 27. For it seemeth to me unreasonable to send a prisoner, and not withal to signify the crimes laid against him. Festus hoped, and not without reason, that the examination before so great a man as Agrippa—one, too, who was so well versed in the difficult question of Jewish law and tradition—would elicit fresh facts hitherto kept in the background. At all events, by listening to the proceedings, the Roman official felt he

personally would become better acquainted with the secret history of the whole affair, and more competent to write a clear and definite report to the authorities at home. This report evidently weighed much on Festus' mind. He had newly come into office, and he was aware that a confused, contradictory statement might seriously injure him at Rome. There is also no doubt but that he was a fair and just man on the whole, wishful to do his duty and to make his office as acceptable as possible among the Jews, who he knew hated the dominion of Rome. This is the character of the man left us by Josephus.

## CHAPTER XXVI.

### *Paul's Defence at Cæsarea before King Agrippa, Bernice, and Festus.*

- 1 **T**HEN Agrippa said unto Paul, Thou art permitted to speak for thyself. Then Paul stretched forth the hand, and "answered" for himself:
- 2 I think myself happy, king Agrippa, because I shall "answer" for myself this day before thee touching all *the things* whereof
- 3 I am "accused" of the Jews: Especially *because I know* thee to be expert in all "customs and questions which are among the
- 4 Jews: wherefore I beseech thee to hear me patiently. "My manner of life from *my* youth, which was at the first among
- 5 mine own nation at Jerusalem, know all the Jews; Which knew me "from the beginning, if they would" testify, "that after
- 6 "the most straitest sect of our "religion I lived "a Pharisee.
- 7 And now I stand and am judged for "the hope of "the promise made of God unto *our* fathers: Unto which *promise* "our twelve tribes, "instantly serving" "God" day and night, hope
- 8 "to come. For which hope's sake, king Agrippa, I am
- 9 "accused of the Jews. Why should it be thought *a thing* incredible with you, that God should raise the dead? I verily
- 10 thought with myself, "that I ought to do many *things* contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. "Which *thing* I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the "saints did I shut up in prison," having "received authority from the chief priests; and "when
- 11 they were put to death, I gave my voice" against *them*. And "I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled *them* to blaspheme; and "being exceedingly mad against them, I
- 12 persecuted *them* even unto strange" cities. "Whereupon "as

<sup>a</sup> Vers. 2, 24 (Gk.). See ch. xix. 33.

<sup>b</sup> Ver. 7. See ch. xix. 38. <sup>c</sup> See ch. vi. 14. <sup>d</sup> Cp. Gal. i. 13. <sup>e</sup> Lu. i. 3 (Gk.).

<sup>f</sup> See Mat. xxv. 24. <sup>g</sup> So ch. xxii. 3. <sup>h</sup> Jas. i. 26, 27. <sup>i</sup> Ch. xxiii. 6; Phil. iii. 5. <sup>j</sup> So Lu. ii. 25. See ch. xxiii. 6.

<sup>k</sup> See Lu. xxiv. 27; ch. xiii. 32.

<sup>l</sup> See Jas. i. 1. <sup>m</sup> Lu. vii. 4 (Engl.).

<sup>n</sup> Supplied from ch. xxiv. 14, xxvii. 23. <sup>o</sup> Phil. iii. 11 (Gk.).

<sup>p</sup> See 1 Tim. i. 13.

<sup>q</sup> See ch. viii. 3. <sup>r</sup> See ch. ix. 13.

<sup>s</sup> Ch. ix. 14, 21, xxii. 4, 5. <sup>t</sup> See ch. xxii. 20.

<sup>u</sup> Ch. xxii. 19. So Mat. x. 17.

<sup>v</sup> Ch. ix. 1, 2. <sup>w</sup> Lu. xii. 1 (Gk.); ch. xiv. 18.

<sup>x</sup> To ver. 18, ch. ix. 3-8, xxii. 6-11.

<sup>1</sup> *better*, 'defended himself.' <sup>2</sup> *better*, 'because I am about to defend myself.'

<sup>3</sup> *more accurately*, 'if they were willing to bear witness.'

<sup>4</sup> *more accurately*, 'earnestly worshipping.'

<sup>5</sup> *omit* 'God.'

<sup>6</sup> *The older authorities omit* 'Agrippa.'

<sup>7</sup> *literally*, 'in prisons.'

<sup>8</sup> *more accurately*, 'my vote.'

<sup>9</sup> *more accurately*, 'even unto foreign cities.'

I went to Damascus with authority and commission from the  
 13 chief priests. At midday, O king, I saw in the way a light from  
 heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about  
 14 me and them which journeyed with me. And when we were  
 all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and  
 saying<sup>10</sup> in <sup>a</sup> the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest  
 15 thou me? *it is* hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And  
 I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he<sup>11</sup> said, I am Jesus whom  
 16 thou persecutest. But rise, and <sup>a</sup> stand upon thy feet: for I  
 have appeared unto thee for this *purpose*, to <sup>b</sup> make<sup>12</sup> thee <sup>c</sup> a  
 minister and a <sup>d</sup> witness both of *these things* which thou hast  
 seen, and of *those things* in the which I will appear unto thee;  
 17 <sup>e</sup> Delivering thee from the people, and *from* <sup>f</sup> the Gentiles,  
 18 <sup>g</sup> unto whom now<sup>13</sup> I send thee, <sup>h</sup> To open their eyes, and<sup>14</sup> to  
 turn<sup>15</sup> *them*<sup>16</sup> <sup>i</sup> from darkness to light, and *from* the <sup>j</sup> power of  
 Satan unto God, that they may receive <sup>k</sup> forgiveness of sins,  
 and <sup>l</sup> inheritance<sup>17</sup> among them which are sanctified by faith  
 19 that is in me. Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not dis-  
 obedient unto the heavenly vision: But showed<sup>18</sup> first unto  
 20 them of Damascus, and <sup>m</sup> at Jerusalem, and <sup>n</sup> throughout all the  
 coasts<sup>19</sup> of Judæa, and *then* <sup>o</sup> to the Gentiles, <sup>p</sup> that *they* should  
 repent and <sup>q</sup> turn to God, and<sup>20</sup> do<sup>21</sup> works meet for repentance.  
 21 For these causes <sup>r</sup> the Jews caught me in the temple, and went  
 22 about to kill *me*. Having therefore obtained help of God, I  
 continue unto this day, witnessing both to <sup>s</sup> small and great,  
 saying none other *things* than those which <sup>t</sup> the prophets and  
 23 <sup>u</sup> Moses did say should come: That Christ <sup>v</sup> should suffer, and  
 that he *should be* <sup>w</sup> the first *that* <sup>x</sup> should rise from the dead,  
 and should show <sup>y</sup> light unto the people, and to the Gentiles.  
 24 And as he thus <sup>z</sup> spake<sup>22</sup> for himself, Festus said with a loud  
 voice, Paul, <sup>a</sup> thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make  
 25 thee mad. But he<sup>23</sup> said, I am not <sup>b</sup> mad, <sup>c</sup> most noble<sup>24</sup>  
 Festus; but speak forth *the* words of truth and <sup>d</sup> soberness.  
 26 For the king knoweth of these *things*, before<sup>25</sup> whom also I  
<sup>e</sup> speak freely: for I am persuaded that none of these *things*  
 are hidden from him; for this *thing* was not done in a corner.  
 27 King Agrippa, <sup>f</sup> believest thou the prophets? I know that  
 28 thou believest. Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou

<sup>a</sup> See ch. xxi.  
<sup>b</sup> See Ezek. ii.  
<sup>c</sup> Ch. xxii. 14  
<sup>d</sup> (Gk.).  
<sup>e</sup> See Lu. i. 2.  
<sup>f</sup> Ch. xxii. 15.  
<sup>g</sup> So ch. ix. 17.  
<sup>h</sup> xx. 21, 24.  
<sup>i</sup> Chron. xvi.  
<sup>j</sup> 35. See  
<sup>k</sup> Jer. i. 8.  
<sup>l</sup> Ch. xxii. 21.  
<sup>m</sup> See ch. xxviii.  
<sup>n</sup> 28  
<sup>o</sup> So Isa. xxix.  
<sup>p</sup> 18, xxxii. 3.  
<sup>q</sup> xxxv. 5, xlii.  
<sup>r</sup> 7; Eph. i. 18.  
<sup>s</sup> So Ps. xxxvi.  
<sup>t</sup> 9; Isa. xlii.  
<sup>u</sup> 16; Lu. i. 79;  
<sup>v</sup> Jo. viii. 12;  
<sup>w</sup> 2 Cor. iv. 4;  
<sup>x</sup> vi. 14; Eph.  
<sup>y</sup> iv. 18, v. 8;  
<sup>z</sup> Col. i. 12, 13;  
<sup>a</sup> 1 Thes. v. 5;  
<sup>b</sup> 1 Pet. ii. 9.  
<sup>c</sup> See Lu. xxii.  
<sup>d</sup> 53.  
<sup>e</sup> See ch. v. 31.  
<sup>f</sup> So ch. xx. 32.  
<sup>g</sup> See Mat.  
<sup>h</sup> xxv. 34.  
<sup>i</sup> Ch. ix. 20, 22.  
<sup>j</sup> Ch. ix. 29.  
<sup>k</sup> Ch. xi. 26.  
<sup>l</sup> Ch. xiii. 46,  
<sup>m</sup> etc.  
<sup>n</sup> See ch. xvii.  
<sup>o</sup> 30.  
<sup>p</sup> See ch. xv.  
<sup>q</sup> 19.  
<sup>r</sup> Ch. xxi. 27,  
<sup>s</sup> 30, 31, xxiv.  
<sup>t</sup> 18.  
<sup>u</sup> Rev. xi. 18,  
<sup>v</sup> xiii. 16, xix.  
<sup>w</sup> 5, 18, xx. 12.  
<sup>x</sup> So ch. viii.  
<sup>y</sup> 10. See Jer.  
<sup>z</sup> vi. 13.  
<sup>a</sup> See Lu. xxiv.  
<sup>b</sup> 27, 44; ch. x.  
<sup>c</sup> 43, xiii. 27,  
<sup>d</sup> xxiv. 14,  
<sup>e</sup> xxviii. 23.  
<sup>f</sup> See Mat.  
<sup>g</sup> xxvi. 24.  
<sup>h</sup> 1 Cor. xv. 20,  
<sup>i</sup> 23; Col. i. 18;  
<sup>j</sup> Rev. i. 5.  
<sup>k</sup> Rom. i. 4  
<sup>l</sup> (Gk.).  
<sup>m</sup> See Lu. ii. 32.  
<sup>n</sup> Ver. 1.  
<sup>o</sup> Ver. 25 (Gk.);  
<sup>p</sup> ch. xii. 15.  
<sup>q</sup> See 2 Kings  
<sup>r</sup> ix. 11; Mk.  
<sup>s</sup> iii. 21. So  
<sup>t</sup> 1 Cor. i. 23,  
<sup>u</sup> ii. 14, iv. 10.  
<sup>v</sup> Ver. 25 (Gk.);  
<sup>w</sup> ch. xii. 15.  
<sup>x</sup> See 2 Kings  
<sup>y</sup> ix. 11; Mk.  
<sup>z</sup> iii. 21. So  
<sup>a</sup> 1 Cor. i. 23,  
<sup>b</sup> ii. 14, iv. 10.  
<sup>c</sup> Cp. 2 Cor. v.  
<sup>d</sup> 13.  
<sup>e</sup> See Lu. i. 3.  
<sup>f</sup> d Cp. 2 Cor. v.  
<sup>g</sup> 13.  
<sup>h</sup> Ch. ii. 29.  
<sup>i</sup> See ch. iv. 29.  
<sup>j</sup> Ch. xxiv. 14.

<sup>10</sup> Some of the ancient authorities omit 'and saying.'

<sup>11</sup> The older authorities insert 'the Lord' before 'said.'

<sup>12</sup> better, 'to appoint thee.'

<sup>13</sup> omit 'and.'

<sup>14</sup> omit 'them.'

<sup>15</sup> more accurately, 'region of Judæa.'

<sup>16</sup> more accurately, 'doing works.'

<sup>17</sup> better, 'an inheritance.'

<sup>18</sup> Some of the older authorities insert 'Paul' before 'said.'

<sup>19</sup> better, 'most excellent.'

<sup>20</sup> more accurately, 'to whom.'

29 persuadest me to be a <sup>ε</sup> Christian. And Paul said, <sup>κ</sup> I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, <sup>ι</sup> were both almost and altogether such as I am, except <sup>λ</sup> these bonds. And when he had thus spoken,<sup>25</sup> the king rose up, and <sup>ν</sup> the governor, and <sup>μ</sup> Bernice, and <sup>π</sup> they that sat with them : 31 And when they were gone aside, they talked between themselves, saying, " This man doeth nothing worthy of death or of 32 bonds. Then said Agrippa unto Festus, <sup>ο</sup> This man might have been set at liberty, if he had not <sup>ρ</sup> appealed unto Cæsar.

<sup>ο</sup> Ch. xxviii. 18.

<sup>ρ</sup> Ch. xxv. 11, 12, 21, 25, xxviii. 19.

<sup>κ</sup> Ch. xi. 26.  
<sup>ι</sup> Pet. iv. 16  
<sup>λ</sup> So 1 Cor. vii.  
<sup>7</sup> Cp. 2 Cor. xi. 12.  
<sup>κ</sup> Ch. xxiii. 30 (Gk.).  
<sup>2</sup> Tim. ii. 9  
<sup>ν</sup> Cp. ch. xxi. 33. See ch. xxviii. 20.  
<sup>ι</sup> See Mat. xxvii. 2.  
<sup>μ</sup> Ch. xxv. 23.  
<sup>π</sup> Ch. xxiii. 29  
<sup>ο</sup> So ch. xxv. 25.  
<sup>ρ</sup> Cp. ch. xxiii. 9.

<sup>25</sup> *The older authorities omit the words, 'when he had thus spoken.'*

*Paul's Defence of Christianity before King Agrippa, his Sister, and the Procurator Festus, 1-23.*

This famous *apologia* of St. Paul consists of four divisions. The first, vers. 2, 3, consists of a few courteous words addressed to the distinguished prince before whom he was summoned to plead his cause and that of his brethren in the faith. In the second, vers. 4-8, the apostle, after glancing at certain portions of his own early career, breaks at once into the all-important subject of the promised Messiah. In the third, vers. 9-18, he relates the story of that wondrous episode in his own life which induced him to become a Christian ; and then in the fourth division, vers. 19-23, he comes back to his own work—the preaching that a suffering Messiah had come, had died, and had risen again.

Here, as in the case of the other speeches and addresses in these "Acts," we must remember we have only the barest skeleton of the original 'apology' of Paul. Only once or twice, perhaps, in this speech so briefly reported by the compiler of the history, do we possess the very words used, when perhaps some marked emphasis on the part of the speaker, or the exceeding importance of the utterances themselves, left an indelible impress on the memory of the reporter, who, when he came to record this memorable passage in the life-story of Paul, was moved by the Holy Spirit to write them down. Among these, most likely, some of the bitter self-accusations of ver. 11, and especially the words spoken by that Radiant One from heaven (vers. 14, 16, 17, 18).

THE 'APOLOGIA.'

After congratulating himself that on this occasion he was about to speak before one not only high in office and in dignity, but also thoroughly versed in all Jewish customs and questions, Paul proceeded to state exactly how it stood with him—viz., that he, though well known as first a student and then a rigid professor of the strictest school of Pharisaism, was positively persecuted because he held and taught what really all the Pharisee school held and taught, viz. the hope of a resurrection from the dead. Was not *this* the grand hope to which all the elaborate symbolism—the temple service, which never rested day or night—pointed ? [The hope and expectation of the resurrection and the endless life was the crown of all the *Messianic teaching* of the Old Testament.] After what must

have been a stately and magnificent exordium, which must, with its convincing arguments [many of which we can find now in the Epistle to the Hebrews] and passionate earnestness, have brought conviction home to many a Pharisee heart in that brilliant assembly ;—then of a sudden the inspired apostle changed his style and subject, and told the listening audience the wondrous story of the meeting on the Damascus road, and the effect on himself of the sight of the blinding glory of the cloud ; the low passionate voice of the speaker, as he repeated the words his God had spoken to him that morning by the way, must have thrilled king and Sanhedrist as they bent forward to catch the awful sayings which had moved Saul, the learned and admired Pharisee, to throw up his brilliant career, and to cast his lot in with the despised Nazarene. He concluded the strange recital with, 'Well, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision ; and now I am standing before you, hunted down by all these my countrymen, because I obeyed the voice of the Eternal, and preached in many a city, to congregations composed of Gentiles as well as Jews, the truth I had come to learn, that the Messiah of the prophets and Moses could only be a *suffering* Messiah, that He must die, must rise again, the first-born of a new and deathless race—a race to be made up of Gentiles as well as Jews.' At this point he was interrupted by the Roman governor Festus.

Ver. 1. Then Agrippa said unto Paul, *Thou art permitted to speak for thyself.* On this occasion Agrippa, invested with the royal dignity, although only a subject monarch, sat in the president's place during the hearing. He opens the proceedings ; but it is noteworthy to observe that the king does not say, 'I permit thee to speak' (ἵνα λαλῇς), but, 'Thou art permitted ;' literally, 'It is permitted thee' (ἵνα σοὶ ἐπιτρέψω), thus courteously remembering the presence of the Roman procurator, to whom really the power in Cæsarea and Jerusalem belonged. The prisoner Paul, it must not be forgotten, on this occasion was not pleading before his judges : the appeal to Cæsar, which had been allowed, had removed him from all provincial jurisdiction ; he was simply here asked to give an account of the Nazarene or Christian faith, and to state what was the point at issue between him and the supreme council of the Sanhedrim, by whom he was considered unworthy to live.

Then Paul stretched forth the hand, and

answered for himself. This was a usual gesture on the part of the speaker, especially of one accustomed to address masses of men and public assemblies. Here the effect must have been impressive—the hand was chained. 'He answered' with arguments not dissimilar at first sight to those used by him when he was arrested in the temple and he spoke to the Jews from the steps leading to the Antonia Tower. On both occasions he rehearses the marvellous story of the Divine appearance which led to his conversion to the faith of Jesus; but now he relates the history not with the view of asserting his own innocence of any of the charges alleged against him, but to show the grounds upon which he delivered his solemn message. He claims to be still a true, loyal Jew, for that the Christianity which he taught was but the realisation of the hopes set forth in the Old Testament prophets. Mr. Humphry well summarises the leading differences between the two speeches of the apostle in the following terms:—On the steps of Antonia 'he addressed the infuriated populace, and made his defence against the charges, with which he was hotly pressed, of profaning the temple and apostatising from the Mosaic law. He now passes by these accusations, and addressing himself to a more intelligent and dispassionate hearer, he takes the highest ground, and holds himself up as the apostle and messenger of God. With this view, therefore, he paints in more striking colours the awful scene of his conversion, and repeats more minutely that heavenly call which was impossible for him to disobey, and in obeying which, though he incurred the displeasure of his countrymen, he continued to receive the Divine support' (ver. 22).

*First Division of Paul's 'Apologia'—Introductory Address to King Agrippa, 2, 3.*

Ver. 2. **I think myself happy, king Agrippa, because I shall answer for myself this day before thee touching all the things whereof I am accused of the Jews.** This was no mere flattery. Paul says not one word in praise of the young sovereign: he simply with courtesy prefaces his earnest and impassioned words with expressing his satisfaction that he is permitted thus publicly to plead the cause of his Master's holy religion before one so thoroughly conversant as was Agrippa in all the hopes and onlooks of the Jews. The accusations which were made against him (the prisoner Paul) all had reference to these hopes and onlooks, and no one but a learned Jew could possibly understand the charges made against him, or the defence he was about to make.

Ver. 3. **Especially because I know thee to be expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews.** Agrippa II., singularly enough, was especially fitted to act as judge in such a cause as that of Paul, accused of treason to the religion and sacred law of his forefathers; for he was not merely a ruler of Jewish lands, and the appointed guardian of the Jerusalem temple, but was also in religion, professedly at least, a Jew. His father, Herod Agrippa I., was famous for his rigid observance of all Jewish customs and rites, and prided himself upon his connection with the chosen people. The young sovereign himself was well versed in the law and the prophets, and even in the more abstruse traditions of the Fathers. The rabbinic writers speak of him as having attained

a more than ordinary knowledge of these matters, as having even excelled in a knowledge of the law, and, as it has been well urged by Dr. Hackett, 'as the traditions which these rabbinic writers follow, who thus speak of King Agrippa II., could not have flowed from this passage, it confirms the representation here by an unexpected agreement.'

*Second Division of 'Apologia'—Paul refers to his well-known early life, and his fame as a Pharisee—He has never swerved from his old Belief—He touches on its central Tenets, 4-8.*

Ver. 4. **My manner of life from my youth, which was at first among mine own nation at Jerusalem, know all the Jews.** He proceeds now to state *how long* the Jews had known him—from his early youth; *when* they had learned to know him—'at Jerusalem'; and also *what* they knew of him—that he was a Pharisee, living the strictest of lives. He appeals, thus, to all the Jews. This general term included specially the Jews dwelling in Jerusalem and Judæa, and the members of the Sanhedrim—these, in fact were his accusers on the present occasion; but the position which Saul the Pharisee once occupied as the well-known inquisitor of the Sanhedrim, was no doubt well known to all the nation, even to those Jews dwelling in distant countries. In Acts xxii. 3, we read how he had been brought up in Jerusalem. Thus it would seem that Saul, when still a youth, went from Tarsus to complete his education in the Holy City, in the school of the famous Rabbi Gamaliel.

Ver. 5. **Which knew me from the beginning, if they would testify, that after the most straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee.** He speaks here of what was evidently a common knowledge, viz. those details above referred to of his early bringing up. The grave and dignified members of the Sanhedrim, some of whom were doubtless present in that great assembly that morning, could, if they pleased, bow their heads in acquiescence to what he was stating to King Agrippa, but he does not seem to have expected this from them; but, at all events, there was no denial of his words. So he proceeded, 'After the most straitest sect of our religion;' that is, 'After the most rigid school of our religion.' Josephus, in his *Wars of the Jews*, bears witness to the Pharisees' reputation in his days for their religious life and strict observance of the law: 'The Pharisees are a Jewish sect who seem to be more religious than others, and who appear to interpret the law more strictly;' and in other places he alludes to them as looked upon as most skilled in the exact application of the law.

Ver. 6. **And now I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers.** In other words, Paul said: 'I, who am well known as one trained in the severe and rigid Pharisee school, stand accused, because I press home to men the hope of the resurrection, in which hope the Pharisees themselves share—a hope which is taught in the sacred Scriptures, which record the promise made to our fathers—a hope which the temple services, which cease not day nor night, symbolise and ever keep in mind.' *The hope of the promise made of God unto the Fathers* included more than the expectation of a Divine Messiah; it embraced the hope of a resurrection and of a future glorified life.

Ver. 7. **Unto which promise our twelve tribes,**



**instantly serving God day and night, hope to come.** Before discussing the deeply interesting and important questions suggested by these few words, which represent, no doubt, a long and elaborate portion of this 'Apology' of St. Paul's, we will quote the comment of Professor Plumptre on the words 'our twelve tribes,' who are here represented as waiting for the 'promise.' 'It will be noted that St. Paul, like St. James (Jas. i. 1), assumes the twelve tribes to be all alike sharers in the same hope of Israel, and ignores the legend so often repeated and revived, that the ten tribes of the northern kingdom of Israel, after they had been carried away by Shalmaneser, had wandered far away, and were to be found under some strange disguises, in far-off regions of the world. The earliest appearance of the fable is in the apocryphal 2 Esdras xiii. 40-46, where they are said to have gone to "a country where never mankind dwelt, that they might there keep the statutes which they never kept in their own land." The apostle, on the contrary, represents the whole body of the twelve tribes as alike serving God (with the special service of worship) day and night.'

In addition to the above-quoted contribution to the much-vexed question respecting the fate of the ten tribes of Israel, it is worthy of note to remember that the words of Ezra vi. 17, viii. 35, clearly indicate that many of the 'lost' ten tribes must have returned with Judah and Benjamin, and the priests and Levites (Ezra i. 5-11), to the old loved Land of Promise.

Whether or no the descendants of the lost portions of the ten northern tribes have been preserved a separate people in order one day to swell the ranks of that miraculously preserved nation, known in all lands still as Jews, is uncertain. This much however is clear, and perhaps in the discussions which constantly take place respecting the lost tribes is too much left out of sight, that although the present Jews are largely, possibly mostly, made up of the tribes of Judah, Benjamin, and Levi, still vast numbers of the descendants of the tribes of the northern kingdom of Israel, we see from the above passage of Ezra, must be reckoned among the Jews of our day. This fact was certainly recognised by both Paul and James some eighteen centuries ago. It is therefore inaccurate to speak, as is usually the practice, of the lost ten tribes. Now the promise to which all the twelve tribes of Israel hoped to come, as has been already explained above, was eternal life with God; and the attainment of this eternal life, the orthodox Jew was conscious, was bound up with the work and office of the coming Messiah. Paul, carefully trained in this orthodox Jewish school by one of its most famous and popular teachers, the Rabban Gamaliel, held this belief firmly from his student days; but Paul had subsequently arrived at a further stage of the common belief than had the Pharisees who now thirsted for his destruction: *he* had already come to the accomplishment of the hope to which *they* with their services and sacrifices were earnestly looking on to. In the Crucified and Risen Jesus of Nazareth, Paul knew that the beginning of the promise was reached, that the long-looked-for hope was accomplished, and that eternal life with God had begun for himself and all who recognised this Jesus as Messiah. Had He not vanquished death? Was He not the first-born of the new race who, through the gates of death, had entered into life?

The words, 'instantly serving God day and night,' refer to the elaborate and never-intermitted service of worship and sacrifice, with its symbolism ever pointing to another and a higher life—ever pointing, too, to the sacrifice on the cross, which won for men their access to this higher life. They failed to read aright the awful lesson taught by their perpetual sacrifices, that without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins. For the strange expression 'day and night,' compare Ps. cxxxiv. 1, 'Bless ye the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord, *which by night stand in the house of the Lord.*'

Ver. 8. **Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?** First, on the punctuation of this verse. Some MSS. write the words, 'What? Is it to be thought incredible with you if God should raise the dead?' The majority, however, of the later critical expositors consider that the rendering given in our English Bible, as above, is more suited to the calm dignity of the apostle's manner and style on this memorable occasion. Besides, Meyer calls attention to the fact that *τι* alone in the sense of 'what' is never used, but that the expression would be *τι γὰρ*, *τι δὲ*, or *τι οὖν*.

Much in the original 'apology' of Paul is here evidently omitted. We must remember that the barest outline or sketch-plan of the original is all that we possess in these 'Acts.' The connection here apparently is as follows:—He has been speaking of the 'Hope' which Israel cherished—the centre of their religious worship. 'Well, King Agrippa, it is in connection with this "Hope" that I am accused, that I stand a prisoner here, because I say the "Hope" is now accomplished. . . . And they are quite right when they assume I believe it to have been accomplished in the Crucified and Risen Jesus of Nazareth, the suffering and triumphant Messiah of the prophets. These my brother Jews will not believe in this resurrection, though I have seen Him and heard His voice, and so has many another. Why will they not believe? Is it then with *them*, with *you*, King Agrippa, a thing incredible that God should raise the dead? Has this strange marvel been unknown in the past history of our race?' He referred to such incidents as 1 Kings xvii. 17-23; 2 Kings iv. 18-37, xiii. 21.

*Third Division of the 'Apologia'—Paul relates the strange Incident in his life which induced him, a Pharisee Teacher, for ever to throw in his lot with the despised Nazarenes—The crucified Nazarene Himself appeared to him, surrounded with an unearthly Glory—He tells Agrippa what the Being, who crossed his path on that solemn day, commanded him to do, 9-18.*

Ver. 9. **I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth.** Paul now changes his tone of indignant and passionate expostulation, and proceeds to speak of his life in the period immediately preceding the Vision of the Damascus road, which drove him at once to forsake his many friends, to abandon his brilliant career, to throw away his loved pursuits, and to associate himself with the men and women he had hitherto scorned and persecuted—the Vision which changed the proud Pharisee leader into the despised Nazarene outcast. The train of thought in Paul's mind seems

to have been as follows : He was here addressing a brilliant assembly made up of Herodian princes, Jewish priests and rabbis, and Roman officials and soldiers ; and these, with a few exceptions among the Pharisee members of the Sanhedrim who were present, were disbelievers not merely in the fact that the crucified Jesus of Nazareth had risen, but in the general doctrine of a resurrection from the dead. King Agrippa, who presided that day at Cæsarea, was no doubt at heart a Sadducee—one who sympathised with the Sadducean high priest, whom he probably himself had nominated to his high dignity. To this Agrippa, and the other notables sitting by his side, the Gentle apostle spokē these words. He, like them, had been an unbeliever in the crucified Nazarene, and had not, like the Roman Festus and his predecessors, and probably King Agrippa, contented himself with looking on the Nazarene sect with contemptuous indifference, but had persecuted these defenceless ones to the death. Now God in His mercy had changed his (Paul's) heart ; why should He not now touch the hearts of those listening to him ? I, Paul, in that state of mind in which I then was, deemed it my solemn duty to do all that was in my power to stamp out the memory of the name of the Crucified.

Ver. 10. **Which thing I also did in Jerusalem.** Probably referring here especially to his share in the martyrdom of Stephen, when 'the witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet, whose name was Saul' (Acts vii. 58) ; when Saul was consenting unto his death (viii. 1) ; and also to his conduct shortly after, when, 'As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women, committed them to prison' (viii. 3). All these things took place in the Holy City.

**And many of the saints did I shut up in prison.** The term 'saints' (*τῶν ἁγίων*) used here in such a place seems at first sight remarkable. When recounting these scenes of his early life to the Jews at Jerusalem (xxii. 4, 5), he speaks of the men and women he had caused to be bound and delivered into prison some of whom he had 'persecuted unto the death.' But he carefully avoided this loving title. Before the Jews he shrank from using any expression of reverential admiration which might arouse his angry countrymen's wrath against the sect of whom they were already so unreasonably jealous ; but now, speaking before men of the world like Agrippa and Festus, he gives these noble martyrs, long since in Paradise, a title of honour which aggravated his own guilt as their persecutor. Indeed, as it has been well remarked, the confident, bold tone of the whole of this speech sounds less like the words of a prisoner defending himself, than of a fearless advocate pleading before a tribunal.

**And when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them.** This refers to the 'great persecution' mentioned in chap. viii. 1-4, in which Saul the Pharisee of Tarsus appears to have been the most prominent actor : 'As for Saul, he made havoc of the church' (ver. 3) ; 'And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord' (ix. 1). The 'Acts' story only mentions one public execution in this bitter persecution ; but the words used here, 'when they were put to death ;' the expression of chap. xxii. 4 : 'I persecuted this way unto the death ;' and the opening sentence of

chap. ix. : 'And Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord,' lead us decidedly to conclude that many besides Stephen, in that first trial season, witnessed unto death, and through pain and agony passed to their rest in the Paradise of God.

In several places in the Epistles we find traces of the memory of some bitter and terrible persecutions, of which this very early one, when Paul played the part of chief inquisitor, was perhaps the severest and most fatal. See Heb. xii. 4, where those to whom the epistle is addressed are appealed to as having 'not yet resisted unto blood.' See, too, 1 Thess. ii. 15 ; Jas. v. 10.

The word 'voice' in the sentence, 'I gave my voice against them,' would be rendered more accurately by 'vote' (*ψῆφος*). This was a small black or white stone or pebble which was used for voting, as in the ballot. For condemnation, usually a black stone was put into the voting urn ; for acquittal, a white one.

This assertion by Paul of his having voted for the death of certain of the 'saints' in the early Church, has been taken as a proof of his having been, in his Pharisee days, a member of the supreme council of the Sanhedrim. This is possible, but is by no means certain ; for the words here used by him may have referred to his having been in past days a member of some important tribunal acting under the direction of the supreme council. Though possible, it is certainly very doubtful if the young man Saul ever had a seat in the Sanhedrim, for—(a) granting the most extended conception of the expression 'young man,' the age of Saul would hardly have warranted his occupying a seat in that grave assembly of elders ; (b) tradition positively declares that one of the necessary qualifications of a member of the great Jewish council was that he should be married and have a family, as it was supposed that one who was a father himself would be more inclined to temper justice with mercy. There is certainly nothing in Paul's known life which would lead us to suppose that the missionary apostle was ever married.

Ver. 11. **And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme.**

This alludes, no doubt, not only to the many synagogues in Jerusalem (see chap. vi. 9, and note), but also to the synagogues situated in the many different places whither he was sent by the Sanhedrim in his work of persecution. It was on his way to visit the synagogues in one of these distant places (Damascus) that the Lord met him by the way, and changed His persecutor into His servant. On the words, 'I punished them oft in every synagogue,' Hackett quotes an instructive passage from Biscoe respecting punishment being inflicted in the synagogue : 'The chief rulers of the synagogues, being also the judges of the people in many cases, especially those which regarded religion, chose to give sentence against offenders and see their sentence executed in the synagogue. Persons were always scourged in the presence of the judges. For, punishment being designed *in terrorem*, what more likely to strike the mind with awe, and deter men from falling into like errors, than to have it executed in their religious assemblies and in the face of the congregation ? Our Lord foretold that His disciples should be scourged in the synagogues (Matt. x. 17, xxiii. 34) ;

and we learn here that Paul was an instrument in fulfilling this prediction, having beaten them that believed in every synagogue. Another and even darker memory is here evoked by the great apostle as he tells the story of his past. The dead saints; these, though he knew it not then, he had helped in the morning of their battle to win their crown. But here was a thought of unspeakable sadness: there were some weaker brothers, some timid sisters; these his harsh words and cruel deeds had compelled to blaspheme that glorious name by which they were called. This is evidently the meaning of Paul's words here. Some would try and explain away the sorrowful thoughts suggested by this "memory," by supposing that all Saul did was to try to induce them to deny the faith they once said they loved; but it would be very hazardous to conclude that, among the many of different sexes, of varied ranks and ages, none swerved from their fidelity to Christ. The words of the Proconsul Pliny to his master the Emperor Trajan, in the first quarter of the next century, tell us that the same means which Saul the Pharisee had used to compel the followers of Christ to blaspheme, were soon used by Gentile persecutors: "There were some who denied that they were, or ever had been, Christians: these, before me, called upon the gods and thy image [he is writing to Trajan]; which image, along with those of the gods, I had ordered to be brought for this purpose. They offered to them incense and wine, besides which they reviled Christ—none of which things, it is said, those who are indeed Christians can be compelled to do. These I thought might be allowed to go free."

**Being exceedingly mad against them.** No language seems too strong for the brave Christian advocate to use concerning himself and his former conduct towards those men and women, whose brother and fellow-believer he now professed himself to be. How he once detested these poor persecuted saints, how he loathed their cause! His whole life was devoted to the work of stamping out this strange devotion to One who had been crucified, and who these deluded men and women affirmed had risen again. What now had changed the life purpose of this young enthusiastic Pharisee? We can fancy a hush falling over the brilliant assembly, as Paul, after winding up this portion of his speech with the words telling of his journeying forth to strange cities to hunt down these believers on Jesus of Nazareth, being exceedingly mad against them, paused doubtless for an instant before telling King Agrippa, and Festus, and Bernice *what* had changed him.

**Even unto strange cities.** He had done the Sanhedrim's work well and thoroughly in the 'home' district, and as far even as foreign cities, writes the compiler of the 'Acts.' Among these, Damascus is specially singled out for mention, for it was the last on the inquisitor's list which was visited; and there the bitter persecution, as far as Saul was concerned, was only planned, but was never carried out.

**Ver. 12. Whereupon, as I went to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests.** This is the third account contained in the 'Acts' of St. Paul's conversion (see the general remarks and comment on chap. ix. 3-18). Of these three, the first is woven into the general history of the first days of the faith; the second is an abbreviated report of Paul's speech on the

occasion of the tumult in the temple, and was spoken from the stair leading from the temple court into the castle of Antonia (chap. xxii.). This is the third, and it occurs in the argument of his defence of Christianity before Agrippa and Festus at Casarea. It contains four noticeable details which do not appear in the two other accounts of the appearance of the risen Lord: (1) The overpowering glory of the light is here dwelt upon in a special manner. We are told how it exceeded even the brightness of an oriental sun at noon. The brightness was so awful, that *all*, including Saul, fell to the ground prostrate through fear. (2) The voice, we are told here, spoke to Saul in the Hebrew tongue [in one of the other narratives of the appearance, this could not have been referred to; for Paul, on the steps leading to Antonia, spoke to the people in the Hebrew language. Here, however, before Agrippa and Festus, of course he spoke Greek]. (3) The addition of the proverb so well known in classical literature, 'It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.' These words must be struck out of the text of the account of the appearance in chap. ix., as they only occur in one of the ancient authorities. (4) The mission of Paul to the Gentiles is here alluded to as forming part of this first communication of the Lord from heaven to the man chosen to be the servant of the Most High (see notes on this further). The other accounts of the conversion are silent as to this most important part of the command of the blessed One when He appeared to Paul on the way to Damascus. Thus the four special additions here made are—(1) *the reference to the unearthly glory of the light and its effect*; (2) *the mention of the language (Hebrew) in which the Lord spoke*; (3) *the quotation of the Heathen proverb*; (4) *the command respecting his mission to the Gentiles*. See the notes on chap. ix. 3-8 and chap. xxii. 6-10, where, especially in the first narrative, the varied circumstances related in each of the accounts are discussed at length.

**Ver. 13. A light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me.** It has just been mentioned that this blaze of glory suddenly shone round the Pharisee and his company at midday. The comparison, then, of the strange great light he remembered so well, was made with the splendour of an eastern noonday sun. Bathed, so to speak, in this glorious sea of light, Saul *saw* the form of Him that had been crucified and had risen again. May we not say without temerity, that, as he gazed, the relentless foe of the Nazarene and His hated sect saw, on that transfigured form, some of the marks of the Passion which he had so often derided and spoken of as the well-earned guerdon of a false impostor, that he saw those well-known marks we know the risen Lord still bore (John xx. 27)—*the print of the nails, and the scar of the spear* (see note on ix. 3)?

**Ver. 14. And when we were all fallen to the earth.** See note on ix. 7, where the apparent discrepancy between the two accounts is discussed.

**I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue.** On the use of the Hebrew tongue on this solemn occasion, see the Excursus at the end of this chapter.

**It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.** This proverb, well known in classical writers, is discussed at length in an Excursus which follows chapter ix. Although these words are omitted in

the account of the appearance on the Damascus road by the writer of the 'Acts' in chap. ix. 5, and must therefore in that place be expunged from the text, here there is no shadow of doubt that the words formed part of Paul's own account of the 'appearance.' Later scribes, as they copied MSS. of the 'Acts,' finding them here, no doubt inserted them in the passage of the ninth chapter, which relates the Lord's words to Saul.

Ver. 16. **But rise, and stand upon thy feet.** These words introduce a portion of the interview passed over in the two other accounts of the 'appearance.' Commentators have been apparently somewhat perplexed here, owing to the similarity of the words of the glorified Lord which follow here with the commands given to Ananias to deliver to Saul, as reported in the narrative of chap. ix. 15, 16. It is most improbable that Paul here 'condenses into one, various sayings of our Lord to him at different times, in visions and by Ananias' (Dean Alford). Nor does it seem likely, when we consider the extraordinary solemnity of the scene which Paul is here describing to King Agrippa, and the overwhelming influence which it had upon his whole subsequent life, that the apostle is here simply summarising the words of Ananias spoken to him three days later, treating those words as sayings of God addressed to him. It is far more reasonable to take the account here given by Paul in its natural obvious sense, and to regard the words of the Lord which immediately follow here in this and the two following verses as positively uttered on this momentous occasion. They, in fact, explained to the amazed and awe-struck Pharisee the reason of the blinding glory and the awful voice which had arrested him and his company on his entrance into Damascus. Nor is it at all improbable that the substance of this communication was repeated again to him by Ananias, or was pressed upon him in a vision; for it told him, in fact, what it was the Lord wished to be the one great object of his life—the guiding the Gentiles, those peoples who had so long sat in darkness and in the shadow of death, into light.

**For I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee.** The words were reassuring; the awe-struck man might arise without fear. The Divine One, whom, not knowing, he had opposed with so intense a purpose, cherished no feeling of wrath against him; on the contrary, He had chosen him out of all the sons of men for a great work; or, in Dr. Hackett's words, 'The object of the vision was to summon him to a new and exalted sphere of effort.' Saul the Pharisee was to bear witness not only of the present sublime scene, in which the Crucified appeared surrounded with a glory too bright for mortal eyes to gaze into; but he was to be a witness also to tell out to the world, to Jew and Gentile, to high-born and low-born, the story of future revelations which would be made to him in coming days. Notably these future revelations referred in the first instance to those special appearances of the Lord to Paul in visions, trances, or ecstasies, such as are chronicled in chap. xxii. 17-21, when he fell into a trance as he was praying in the temple, and in the Second Epistle to the Corinthian Church, xii. 1-5; but the reference to 'those things in the which I will appear to thee,' of which things Paul was to be the witness, really was to those

great summaries of Divine truth which Paul the apostle put out in after days, in the form of epistles to the Gentile churches—those Divine handbooks to Christian doctrine and Christian life. It was really in these lonely hours, perhaps in the still eventide or quiet night, after the day's hard toil spent in the workrooms of men like Aquila the tentmaker, that *God indeed appeared to Paul* and guided his thoughts. It was of these appearances in after years that Paul was to be the witness—not only to Roman governors and Jewish kings, not only to the dwellers under the far-reaching power of the imperial Rome of that day; but he was to be the witness, though perhaps he failed then to realise it, to nations yet unborn, in lands still undiscovered.

The form of the Lord's words to Saul, telling him to be a witness of what he was then seeing, and also to be witness of what he would afterwards come to the knowledge of, is not unlike another charge given by the same glorified and risen Saviour to a brother apostle of St. Paul: '*Write the things,*' said the Son of man, speaking as a King in all the Majesty of heaven, to John in his lonely watch at Patmos, '*write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter*' (Rev. i. 19).

It is remarkable that Paul, the last called, the one admitted into the fellowship of the holy Twelve after no little anxious thought, the one always looked on by a portion of the early Church with doubt and suspicion, should have been *the apostle* commissioned to be the witness of the glory of Christ. In the midst of all his sufferings and bitter persecutions, endured at the hands especially of his own countrymen, often-cruelly misunderstood, forsaken, and deserted not once or twice in that restless, brave life of his, by his own friends and converts, this thought must have been ever present to the mind of the tried servant of Jesus Christ. It was his one great comfort, joy, and support, this blessed memory of the noontide meeting outside the Damascus gates, when he was witness of the glory of Christ.

Ver. 17. **Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee.** The memory of these words of the Son of God armed the apostle of the future against all the terrors which awaited him, and at the same time prepared him to bear his heavy cross.

It was no doubt that, trusting in this promise, Paul was comparatively careless in the midst of the most urgent perils which threatened his liberty and even his life. Strong in the conviction—for had he not heard that Divine One, on whose radiant glory he for a brief minute or two once gazed, say it?—that he had a mighty work to work, and that while engaged in it—like Elisha the man of God of old—he too would be encompassed with a heavenly guard so that no human hand raised against him should ever do him mortal injury;—it was no doubt that, strong in the conviction that the arm of the Lord was ever stretched out between him and death, he resisted the repeated warnings of his dearest friends—many of them endowed with the gift of prophecy—who tried to dissuade him from this dangerous journey to Jerusalem which had resulted in this present captivity and its many fearful dangers, and which brought him in the end to preach his Master's gospel at Rome. How often in that strange harassed life

of his, so touchingly painted in his own glowing words in 2 Cor. xi. 23-27, and vi. 4-10, must this sure promise of his Messiah reigning from His glory-throne in heaven have come up and cheered him with a voice not of this world !

Ver. 18. **To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light.** The beautiful words of Isaiah's prophecy of the coming Messiah and His peculiar work, seem to ring in our ears as we read these words of the glorified Redeemer. Read now in the light which the history of eighteen centuries of the struggles of Christianity flings over the old Hebrew prophecies, one marvels at the strange blindness which came over the Jewish people when their Messiah visited them, and which induced them to hinder in every possible way His blessed work among men. The two great features in Jesus Christ's life and work which shocked His own people and drove them into fierce rebellion,

were—(1) *In His life*, He presented the true image of a suffering Messiah. (2) *In His work*, begun by Himself and faithfully carried on by His disciples, He showed that the kingdom of the future was not intended to be confined to the old chosen race, nor to the old Holy Land, but that the chosen race of the future was to be made up of all mankind, and the Holy Land of the future was to consist of all the countries of the world. And this is exactly what their own prophets, in clear language, all foretold. The Isaiah prophecy, which is here so faithfully reproduced in the form of a charge to Saul from the glorified Jesus, will be found in Isa. xlii. 6-16, where the Messiah is especially mentioned as given for a light of the Gentiles.

The exact correspondence between the prophecy of Isaiah and the command of Jesus to Paul will be best seen from a glance at the prophecy and command when set side by side :—

#### ISAIAH XLII.

'I the Lord . . . will give thee' (My servant Messiah) . . . *'for a light of the Gentiles ; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house. . . .*

*'Ver. 16. I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not, and I will lead them in paths that they have not known : I will make darkness light before them. . . . These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them.'*

#### JESUS' COMMAND TO PAUL, ACTS XXVI.

'Ver. 16. I have appeared to thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness. . . .

*'Ver. 17. Delivering thee . . . from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee.*

*'Ver. 18. To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light.'*

With what weighty force must all this have struck Paul during those two to three years' solitary study in Arabia which succeeded the 'Damascus journey' and came before his active ministry !

**And from the power of Satan unto God.** The glorified King was still considering the case of the Gentiles, among whom Saul's life-work lay. He here regards all that elaborate system of idolatry which among the Pagan nations represented religious worship, and which in so many cases encouraged and even taught the vilest profligacy, as belonging to the realm of Satan.

**That they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith which is in me.** The purpose and end of Saul's life-work is here sketched out. The peoples who had hitherto sat in darkness and in the shadow of death, were to be guided into a knowledge of their state, of their slavery to sin, of the impossibility of their being able to help or redeem themselves, of their utter hopelessness as regards the future. *Their eyes were to be opened.* This was the first step. The second was to tell them of the one fountain where all sin and uncleanness might be washed away—a fountain open to Gentile as well as Jew ; they were to be told how to turn from Satan to God. The third step was to show what would be the result of this opening the blind eyes and this seeing their real state, and of their turning to God. *Forgiveness of all sin* would follow, and they would win a place among the sanctified, a home in one of the many mansions of the redeemed and restored.

The closing words tell us that these blessed results were to be produced by faith, in its highest, truest sense of loving trust, entire child-like confidence in Jesus the Crucified and Risen.

*Fourth and Concluding Division of the 'Apologia' of Paul—After the Appearance of the Crucified to him, he at once obeyed His Voice, and went about everywhere to proclaim His Message, not merely to Jews—For this reason the Jews sought his Life ; but he kept on, helped with unceasingly Help, unto that very day, telling out to all, that the Words of the old Hebrew Prophets respecting a Suffering Messiah had been fulfilled in the Crucified Jesus of Nazareth, 19-23.*

Ver. 19. Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision. In other words, being convinced by such a Divine intimation that my old life was the life of one fighting against the will and purpose of the God of my fathers, I at once obeyed the solemn commands of Him who deigned to appear to me that day outside Damascus.

Commentators well call attention here to Paul's emphatic testimony respecting the freedom of the human will. This was clearly taught in the old Hebrew Scriptures in such grave and momentous passages as, 'See, I have set before thee this day life and good, and death and evil ; . . . But if thine heart turn away, so that thou wilt not hear' (Deut. xxx. 15-17) ; and here Paul, in his declaration that he was not disobedient to the heavenly will, intimates that it would have been possible for him to refrain from obeying that will and to resist it. The words of the famous proverb quoted by the glorified Lord, imply the same truth. The ox may, if he please, kick against the goad, though the result of such an opposition would have been simply pain and suffering to the animal. Divine grace, we must remember, is never irresistible ; it is an awful thought that a time may

come in the life of every man and woman, when the last promptings of the Spirit of the Lord may be quenched.

Ver. 20. But showed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judæa, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God. It is noticeable that the verb in the original Greek, here rendered 'showed first,' is the imperfect, and implies a continuing activity: 'I kept on showing.' The course of that long restless activity of his, from the moment of his seeing the Lord by the way, until that very morning when he stood before King Agrippa and spoke these things, is here very briefly in these few words sketched out: 'From that day have I kept on telling out His message—yes, in Damascus and Jerusalem, throughout all the old land of the Jews, away among the isles of the unnumbered Gentiles.' In his short enumeration, the circle of his work is ever widening—at first in Damascus, among the synagogues and the few Christians there in those very early days of the faith; then on the broader and more public stage of the Holy City Jerusalem; the circle widens, and the delivery of the message is carried on throughout all the coasts of Judæa. All of a sudden the area is indefinitely increased as the memory of the many congregations of distant Galatia, of remote Lycaonia, of storied Greece, of populous and luxurious Asia, surged up in the apostle's mind; and he adds those broad inclusive words, 'and then to the Gentiles,'—to the heathen world.

We have no difficulty in tracing in the 'Acts' and 'Epistles' the story of his preaching at Damascus and Jerusalem. We know from Barnabas' testimony, that he preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus (chap. ix. 27); and that in Jerusalem, too, he spoke boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus, and disputed against the Grecians (chap. ix. 28, 29); but we have some difficulty in exactly fixing the date of the preaching throughout all the coast of Judæa. Dr. Hackett suggests that this part of the work of Paul was carried on when he went to the Holy Land at the time of the famine (see chap. xi. 30), or while he was at Jerusalem, between his first and second mission to the Heathen (see chap. xviii. 22).

The fourth and greatest of his labours here alluded to among the Gentiles, includes all his missionary toils in Asia Minor and Greece.

And do works meet for repentance. Here Paul, as was his custom always in his teaching, is careful to show that his theology was something more than a creed; it was a life. It was by no means enough that the Jew should profess sorrow for the past, for his rejection of the risen Messiah—not sufficient that the Pagan should desert the altars of his many gods for the simple, earnest worship of the Christian in their 'upper room,' if they did not at the same time change their way of living. It is the gravest of all mistakes to suppose that the great apostle of faith ever omitted to press home to his converts the necessity of living the religion they confessed with their lips. With Paul, faith meant the loving, childlike trust in the Fatherhood of God, who, to redeem us and to restore us to our lost home, spared not His own Son. And this loving trust in the mind of Paul would ever show itself in acts and words and thoughts which that Father would look on, and when He looked could love. The expression,

'works meet for repentance,' is a strange one, and apparently was one of John the Baptist's favourite sayings (see Matt. iii. 8). Very probably Paul had been among the rapt listeners of that gallant and devoted spirit who played among the Jews, in the last sad period of their history, the part the monk Savonarola played hundreds of years later among the Christians of the dying Christianity of Italy, and who received at the hands of his fellow-countrymen a like guerdon with John. If Paul had not been himself a hearer of the Baptist, he of course was well acquainted with his preaching (we know many Pharisees came to his baptism, Matt. iii. 7); and such a frequent expression as this, no doubt, was graven with an iron pen for ever on the tablets of St. Paul's heart.

Ver. 21. For these causes the Jews caught me in the temple, and went about to kill me. That is first because he, Saul, once the determined relentless enemy of the 'crucified Nazarene,' now obeyed His voice, and went about everywhere delivering the message of the 'Crucified' with power; and secondly, because he delivered the message indifferently to the hated Gentiles as to the favoured Jews, thereby proclaiming that in Messiah's kingdom there would be no difference between the children of Israel and the children born in the darkness of the isles of the Gentiles.

Ver. 22. Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day. Never without Divine protection had he stood alive before that brilliant court and King Agrippa. Had not the invincible guards of the great King stood around him these past years, that frail life of his would have been long since sacrificed. The memories of Lystra and the rain of cruel stones, the guerdon of his kindly deeds done there; the persecutions of Philippi, of Corinth, and of Berea; the danger in the theatre of Ephesus, and the later deadly perils he had escaped at Jerusalem,—the thoughts which crowded round him when he penned the fourth and eleventh chapters of the second Corinthian letter (see chap. iv. 7-12 and xi. 23 to 27),—prompted this expression of sure trust, of calm, untroubled confidence in the arm of the Lord stretched ever out before him to guard and keep His faithful servant. Paul seemed ever to hear the rustle of the Almighty wings as they moved in solemn guardianship above his head.

Witnessing both to small and great. Rank, not age, is here meant. It is one of the distinguishing characteristics of Christianity that, as regards the future life, it ignores all present class distinctions. That there will be degrees in glory in the eternal kingdom is more than probable, just as there are, we know, grades in the hierarchy of heaven. Thrones, principalities, archangels, angels, with a stammering tongue faintly express our conception of these. But the teaching of Christ as expounded by His chosen servants, such as James, and John, and Paul, shows us that to win this prize of our high calling all stand equally well—the learned and unlearned, high-born and low-born, bond and free, rich and poor. The great teachers of Christianity of the first days, while specially careful, even anxious to avoid disturbing class privileges here on earth, at the same time taught that all these distinctions in society were merely temporary, enduring at most only during the short space of human life; and that in the timeless existence which was to succeed

this vanishing and uncertain earth-life, entirely new conditions would regulate position and work in the City of God. This was a glorious onlook for the slave, and for all the heavy-laden, sorely-tried sons and daughters of men, and one that urged individual generosity and self-denial, while it forbade discontent and repining. So Paul tells the magnificent Jewish king and his haughty sister, that during that long career of restless work he had with equal alacrity and patient care spoken to the poorest slave and proudest noble.

The phrase is one often used in the New Testament. See chap. viii. 10; Kev. xi. 18, xiii. 16, xix. 5, 18, xx. 12.

**Saying none other things than those which the Prophets and Moses did say should come.** Before delivering the message which the One who appeared to him on the Damascus road had entrusted to him, Paul was in the habit of simply relating the well-known story of the arrest, trial, death, and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. He then out of the Old Testament Scriptures showed that this was exactly what Moses and the prophets had foretold of the coming Messiah, viz. that He should suffer, die, and rise from the dead. Paul in his argument used none of the traditions and expository additions which had long been growing round the law and the prophets, but simply for his grand purpose quoted the words of the old inspired men, and they were enough.

**Ver. 23. That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the people and unto the Gentiles.** In other words, 'Protected by a Divine and invisible Guardian, I have gone about, bearing my message to the powerful and humble alike, using as my storehouse of argument only the books of Moses and the prophets, urging that Messiah, as one of the very conditions of His office, would be capable of suffering—ay more, that (after enduring the greatest sufferings of which mortals are capable) He should be the first in the domain of the resurrection, the first-born from the dead; and then should not only show light unto the people, but should be a Light to lighten the Gentiles.' Paul is here giving a summary of the usual arguments he made use of in his preaching respecting the long-expected Messiah. Now the three great questions at issue between the Jew and the Christian were touched upon by him here:—1. This expected One of Moses and the Prophets was not only a *triumphant*—such as the Jews loved to dwell on—but a *suffering* Messiah. 2. This One so long looked for was to be the *first-born from the dead*, the second Adam—the One who (as Lange well puts it) should begin a series of developments of life and resurrection for the benefit of mankind. This grand idea is developed by the Apostle Paul in 1 Cor. xv. 20 ff. and 45 ff., and in Rom. v. 17, 18. 3. The Messiah, when He came, should be the Herald of life and light not only to the *Jew*, but to the despised *Gentile*.

Now these three several points, Paul, when he spoke before King Agrippa, without doubt proved by reference to those special Old Testament Scriptures which with a strange power supported *his view—the Christian view*—of Messiah, somewhat in the way in which he had argued in the Antioch sermon, very briefly reported in Acts xiii. 27–35. It was to these elaborate quotations which Festus especially referred (ver. 24) when he

interrupted Paul with the ejaculation, 'Why, much learning has surely turned your brain!'

The Jewish nation, trodden down during so many hopeless years first of captivity in the far East, then of grinding oppression in their own land, looked on with a passionate eagerness to the advent of the promised King Messiah, of whom their prophets wrote; watching for the triumphant King of the Great Prophet: 'Who is this that cometh from Edom . . . glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength?' and the voice of Messiah made answer: 'I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save . . . the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of mine redeemed is come' (Isa. lxiii. 1–4). This is what they fixed their hungry, expectant gaze upon, and forgot the other picture, which painted the same Messiah with the marred form and visage, without form or comeliness, with no beauty, despised and rejected, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; wounded for others' transgressions and bruised for others' iniquities; cut off out of the land of the living; stricken for the transgression of His people; making His grave with the wicked (Isa. lii. 14, liii. 2, 5, 8, 9).

We must remember how reluctant the very disciples of Jesus were to entertain any other thoughts concerning their beloved Master than those coloured with the rich hues of glory and triumph. See, for instance, Matt. xvi. 22. Never until all was accomplished did even *His own* receive into their heart the idea of a crucified Messiah.

It was indeed for them then, in those last sad days of their national life, 'a hard saying,' though to us now all seems so clear, and the prophecies read in the light of the Passion of Jesus so transparent.

*The Procurator Festus interrupts Paul—The Apostle's Reply to Festus, and Appeal to Agrippa—The Dialogue between Agrippa and Paul—The King and Governor decide that, had not the Prisoner appealed to Caesar, he might have been set at liberty, 24–32.*

**Ver. 24. And as he thus spoke for himself, Festus said with a loud voice, Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad.** Paul apparently had, at this point of his address, completed the main argument, which he wished to put before Agrippa, on the real identity of his belief with that held by all orthodox Jews, and had pointed out where the Christian and the Jew were at issue; and had shown that the *ground-work* of the Christian belief—not only in those points which they held in common with the Pharisee, but also in the points in which they were at variance—was the *sacred law and the prophets*. The Jews would find foretold in their Holy Scriptures every detail in the articles of the Christian faith which Paul taught. We, of course, possess no clue to suggest to us what would have been the conclusion of the apology. So far Festus had listened with respectful attention while the accused Hebrew spoke before his royal guest; but when the eloquent and impassioned apostle came to this part of his defence, and dwelt at length with intense fervour on the resurrection of a Man whom Festus' predecessor Pilate had crucified,—and the Roman heard him discourse with marvellous and winning eloquence—as without doubt Paul did here—on the wondrous results which this stupendous fact, the resurrection of a

crucified malefactor, would surely accomplish in all parts of the great world known or unknown to the Romans, he could contain himself no longer, but interrupted him, crying out loudly, 'Paul, thou art beside thyself!'

Mr. Humphry, commenting on Festus' interruption here, writes: 'He (Festus) was unable to comprehend the earnestness of St. Paul, so unlike the indifference with which religious and moral subjects were regarded by the upper classes at Rome. His self-love suggested to him that one who presented such a contrast to his own apathy must be mad. The convenient hypothesis that much learning had produced this result, may have occurred to him on hearing Paul quote prophecies in proof of his assertions.'

Ver. 25. But he said, I am not mad, most noble Festus; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness. But the Roman governor's accusation of madness was effectively refuted by the calm, courteous words with which the prisoner at once replied to the interruption. The Roman must have listened with some pain, and probably with not a little regret for his sneer, to these last words of that earnest, pleading voice, no longer burning with enthusiasm, but sad and convincing with their quiet, gentle composure: 'No, most noble Festus, I am not mad. The words which excite your indignation are not the outcome of a wild, ill-balanced enthusiasm, not the fancies of the disordered intellect of a half-mad zealot, as you seem to think; they are the expression of truth, of calm, deliberate judgment.' Then turning again towards the silent Jewish king, whom he had been specially addressing until the loud exclamation of the incredulous Roman interrupted him, 'The king will bear me witness that my words have been no wild utterances of a visionary enthusiast.'

Ver. 26. For the king knoweth of these things, before whom also I speak freely; for I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him; for this thing was not done in a corner. 'The Jewish king sitting on that throne, before whom I am now telling out my wondrous story, he knows whether what I have been quoting from the Hebrews' sacred books is to be found there or no. He can tell you if my words relate merely a wild dream of my own, for he knows what has been the people's hope for many a long century—yes, the king, if he will, may tell you too how this central figure of my narrative is no mere phantom I have raised. Well must our King Agrippa know the circumstances of the death of Jesus which took place at Jerusalem in the busy paschal week some thirty years ago, for this thing was not done in a corner. Well is the king aware that now for many years are there countless congregations of our countrymen in the Holy City, here in Cæsarea, scattered over Judæa and Syria, even as far as Italy,—no small and obscure sect now,—who live and die in the firm belief that this crucified Jesus has risen from the dead, just as I aver. No; I am not mad, most noble Festus.'

Ver. 27. King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest. Paul made this appeal, not without reason, to the Jewish sovereign, who, like his father, ostentatiously avowed his belief in Judaism, and was a zealous professor of the faith; thinking, perhaps, thus to win popularity among the people, and so to make up for any defects in his title

to pure Jewish descent. There is however no reason to doubt the sincerity of the belief of Agrippa i. or his son; they seem to have been outwardly, at all events, zealous Jews, and well versed in the sacred traditions of the nation. Among Agrippa's many titles of honour was one he doubtless prized very highly: he was the official guardian of the great Jerusalem temple. This appeal of St. Paul to him, 'Dost thou believe the prophets?' could not fail at once to strike a chord in Agrippa's heart. It was those very prophets in which he believed, which testified in so strange, so marvellous a way, to the truth of the claims of Jesus of Nazareth to the Messiahship. King Agrippa was evidently deeply moved, for he quickly answered Paul.

Ver. 28. Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian. Modern commentators very generally, on the ground that no clear instance has been adduced of the Greek word *ἐπιχειρῶ* signifying 'almost,' give up this ancient, time-honoured rendering, and translate the king's reply either—(a) *With but little persuasion thou wouldest induce me to be a Christian;* (b) *In a little time thou persuadest me to be a Christian;* in other words, 'If thou goest on speaking as thou art doing, thou wilt soon persuade me to become a Christian.' Now both (a) and (b) suppose that the words were spoken in irony; but this is very unlike what we should expect. The address of Paul on this occasion would never have called out a sarcastic reply from Agrippa. It would be quite at variance with the whole tenor of the scene. It is clear from what took place immediately after, the Jewish king and Roman governor were moved deeply, and that both of them were glad to be rid of the responsibility either of condemning or acquitting a man whom they felt was in very truth one of earth's great ones, and wholly innocent of the charge of sedition and treason.

One cannot help calling to mind a somewhat similar but far more momentous scene, when a famous predecessor of Festus, moved too by the transparent innocence of the accused before him, 'washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person. See ye to it' (Matt. xxvii. 24). Irony here seems utterly out of place, and simply inconceivable.

In his reply, too, Paul evidently accepted the words of Agrippa as spoken in earnest. He saw no tinge of irony or even of playful courtesy in the king's reply. To him it was all terribly real. To him the Jewish sovereign was a soul just grasping with feeble uncertain hand the rope of safety which would save it from eternal death, but letting it slip through his weak nerveless fingers. To win that perishing soul, he made a last brave attempt in his reply (see ver. 29). That earnest loving appeal never surely would have been made to one who could dismiss with cruel scornful sarcasm such a defence as had been spoken that day by the prisoner Paul in the Cæsarean judgment-hall.

Considering the laxity which then confessedly existed in the forms of the Greek language used by the many peoples who had adopted Greek as the medium of their intercourse, and that in this so-called Alexandrian or Hellenistic Greek the use of prepositions especially had undergone considerable modifications owing to the orientalisms which naturally among these eastern nations had crept



into the language adopted as the general vehicle of communication in the populous countries which fringed the Mediterranean seaboard, we prefer—as the exegetical difficulties attending the adoption of either of the renderings (a) or (b) above suggested are so great—to retain the old translation of the English Version, ‘Almost (*propemodum*) thou persuadest me to be a Christian.’ Among the distinguished scholars and expositors who thus (in the sense of ‘almost’) understand the exclamation of Agrippa, must be reckoned the famous Greek commentator and writer Chrysostom. In later times, Luther, Castalio, Beza, Grotius, Bengel, Stier, understand the words of the original in the same sense as our English Version.

Moved already by the splendid eloquence and the weighty argument of Paul, the words of the apostle appealing to the king’s known reverence for the words of the Hebrew prophets—a reputation greatly affected by these last princes of the Herodian dynasty—elicited from Agrippa the memorable exclamation, ‘Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian,’ thus publicly testifying his admiration for Paul, and his conviction of his innocence of the charges alleged against him—a conviction repeated in the decision arrived at by himself and the Roman governor together shortly after (see ver. 31); at the same time, however, he cautiously avoided committing himself decidedly to the opinions of a sect which he was aware was generally unpopular among the leading Jews.

From this use of the term ‘Christian’ by the king, it would seem that the appellation had now become one generally used in speaking of the followers of Jesus of Nazareth.

Ver. 29. **And Paul said, I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost and altogether such as I am, except these bonds.** There is a slight difference in the reading of the older MSS. here in the Greek words translated ‘altogether,’ but this hardly affects the interpretation of the passage. The prisoner apostle’s reply to the king’s words, told Agrippa and the rest of that brilliant and strangely assorted company present that day in the judgment hall of Cæsarea, how intense were his convictions, for his earnest passionate desire was that king and governor, Jew and Roman, might share with him in that glorious inheritance which the Master whom he, Paul, served so loyally, had purchased for *all* who would accept His gentle yoke and light burden. But in Paul’s words there is a ring of sorrow: ‘Almost,’ which he re-echoes, seemed to him a poor result to have achieved, a barren success indeed. He felt he had awakened in that worldly man some admiration, perhaps a pitying admiration, for himself, some sympathy for his cause; but he did *not* feel he had won another soldier of Christ.

The exquisite courtesy of the great missionary perhaps is nowhere made more manifest than in the concluding sentence, ‘such as I am, except these bonds.’ He would have Agrippa a fellow-citizen with him in the city of God, a brother heir in his glorious hopes, but without the chain, and the sorrow, and the persecution which in his, Paul’s case had accompanied his profession of Christianity. ‘Such as he,’ beautifully writes Plumptre, ‘pardon, at peace with God and man, with a hope stretching beyond the grave, and an actual present participation in the power of the eternal world—this is what he was desiring for them. If that could be effected,

he would be content to remain in his bonds, and to leave them upon their thrones.’

Ver. 30. **And when he had thus spoken, the king rose up, and the governor, and Bernice, and they that sat with them.** Thus arising and leaving the court in order of their precedence. Such an exact detail evidently proceeds from one who had been an eye-witness of this day’s proceedings. ‘They that sat with them’ were the council of the Procurator.

Ver. 31. **And when they were gone aside, they talked between themselves, saying, This man doeth nothing worthy of death or of bonds.** The second of these public expressions of opinion on the part of such exalted personages as Agrippa and Festus, respecting Paul’s complete innocence of the really grave charge of promoting sedition and of exciting the peoples of the Empire against the ruling powers, was an important memorandum in the history of the great Gentile apostle, who, we know, eventually was condemned and put to death on a similar false charge.

It tells us how groundless were the accusations made against him by those Jews whose dearest interest he, for the sake of his brother men, was compelled to attack—tells us how blameless, how perfectly unselfish, was the whole tenor of that generous brave life.

We need not suppose that this defence of Paul, and that unanimous expression of goodwill he obtained from those distinguished persons who listened to him that day in the Cæsarean court, were without effect upon the after history of the apostle. Although, as the appeal to the emperor had been formally lodged, it was no longer in the power of any provincial official, however exalted, to acquit or to free, any more than to condemn and to punish the prisoner who had thus appealed to Rome; still, as Festus had arranged this hearing before Agrippa with a view to procure satisfactory material to enable him to make an exhaustive report to the minister at Rome, he no doubt wrote such a favourable view of the prisoner’s case as eventually brought about his acquittal and freedom from his first Roman imprisonment. (On the wearisome delays which frequently postponed for a lengthened period the hearing of these provincial appeals, see Excursus C, following chap. xxviii.)

The favourable report of Festus, too, certainly procured him kindly treatment after his arrival in the capital (he was allowed to dwell in his own hired house and even to receive large numbers of friends and pupils there, chap. xxviii. 17–23, 30, 31).

Another result of Paul’s great defence of Christianity before King Agrippa II. and the Procurator Festus, was, that from this time a kindly feeling seems to have sprung up in the king’s heart towards that strange Nazarene sect which he tells us himself he once *almost* was persuaded to join. Stier, in his *Words of the Apostles*, calls attention to the fact of this Agrippa at the outbreak of the great Jewish war, some eight or nine years after the scene at Cæsarea, protecting the Christians, giving them succour, and receiving them kindly into his territory.

Ver. 32. **Then said Agrippa unto Festus, This man might have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed unto Cæsar.** On first thought, it would seem as though this appeal of the apostle was a disastrous step for him to have taken. But on looking deeper into that busy life-story of his, we

see how, in the providence of God, the appeal which prolonged the imprisonment assisted the work of the great missionary. Had he been free at this juncture, it is a question whether he would not have fallen a victim to the murderous plots of his relentless enemies at Jerusalem, who we know had bands of Sicarii (assassins) in their pay to carry out their violent schemes. As it was, he was conducted safely to Rome, the city he had been so long anxious to visit. The very circumstances of his arrival as an imperial prisoner, probably from their publicity, assisted him in his work of telling out his Master's message; so all things worked together for the glory of God.

## EXCURSUS A.

## ON THE USE OF THE HEBREW LANGUAGE BY THE GLORIFIED MESSIAH.

Bengel's remarkable words, 'The Hebrew tongue, Christ's language on earth; His language too when He spoke from heaven,' a comment which at first seems quaint and even fantastic, is, when examined, singularly correct. We will very briefly review the data we possess on the subject. (1) We may assume that the Eternal who spoke to Adam in the garden, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, of Moses and Samuel, of David and Solomon, the 'Lord' of the prophets, was no other than the Second Person of the blessed Trinity, whom we know and worship as Jesus of Nazareth, our adorable Redeemer. For not only did this Divine One on almost innumerable occasions *speak* with and to one or other of His servants, but several times we are distinctly told *He appeared in one form or other visible to mortal eyes*; for instance, to Abraham before the destruction of the cities of the plain, Gen. xviii.; to Moses in the tabernacle, Ex. xxxiii. 9, on the rock, xxxiii. 23; see especially Deut. xxxiv. 10; to Joshua before Jericho, Josh. v. 13-15; to Isaiah in the temple, Isa. vi. 1-5; to Ezekiel by the river Chebar in the land of the Chaldeans, Ezek. i. 4-28; to Daniel, vii. 9-14. But this Divine and Adorable One whom these holy men saw and worshipped, could not have been the First Person of the blessed Trinity; for of the Father we read, that no man hath *seen* God at any time; the only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him (John i. 18).

Thus the Divine One, who on numberless occasions *spoke* to the patriarchs, judges, kings, and prophets of the chosen people, the God of Israel, Jehovah or the Eternal, was that Being whom, after His incarnation, we know as Jesus of Nazareth. Now (2) *in what language* were these repeated communications—from the days of Noah to the time when Malachi, the last of the prophets, lived and taught in Israel—made to the servants of the Most High? In reply, we urge that all the sacred records are written in one tongue; the slight variation of language in the later written books are just what we always find as a language grows older, and has been many centuries in use. It becomes often rougher, fuller of new words which express strange thoughts of other lands and peoples. Thus, to use well-known instances, the Greek of the Athenian poets and philosophers became the Greek of the Alexandrian writers. The Latin of the age of Cæsar and Augustus deteriorated into the Latin of the later Empire, and then became

what we term Italian. So the Hebrew of the Psalms and Isaiah became the rougher Chaldean Hebrew of Daniel; and later, the so-called Hebrew or Aramaic of the Targumist.

But to return to our earliest records, there is no trace that even Moses, who no doubt compiled those most early Genesis chapters, partly from family registers and partly from oral tradition, ever *translated*. He seems, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to have copied down what he found written or preserved in well-authenticated oral tradition. It therefore seems hardly fanciful to assume that the language in which Moses found the few scattered memoirs of the earliest days of the race, was the tongue spoken by the two when they dwelt alone and conversed under the shadow of the trees of Paradise with their eternal Friend and Creator. Must not this have been *Hebrew*, the language of all the writings of Moses, the language evidently of all the records written and oral which he possessed of the dim past?

That God spoke to Moses, that He wrote with His finger on the sacred tables, in Hebrew, is indisputable. It is equally clear that all the communications, from the days of Moses to Malachi, made by the Eternal to the favoured sons of men, who from time to time were privileged to hear the voice of the Divine One, were in Hebrew. There is not the faintest trace of any language other than their own treasured sacred tongue being even of partial use among the chosen people at any time before the captivity. Even during the captivity they still held to it, spoke to one another in it, thought in it, wrote in it. The traces, though, of that sad time, are marked indelibly in their language, which, dating from the hour of the captivity of Babylon, assumes that Chaldean colouring which has so powerfully influenced it ever since. In what may be termed the last age of Israel's existence as a separate nationality, the people scattered now in many lands were compelled to use the language of the nations among whom they dwelt and with whom they traded. Thus Greek, which was then spoken commonly in all those many countries washed by the Mediterranean water, became a language in this last age, known and used by the large majority of the Jewish race, alongside with their own loved Hebrew, which then had become a rougher Chaldean-coloured language. Hence it happened that the New Testament was written in Greek, a tongue understood by the chosen race, and also by those Gentile peoples to whom Messiah wished to speak.

Whether the Lord Jesus in His ordinary dealing with men during the two and a half years of His public ministry on earth, spoke and used Greek, is a disputed point. It will probably never be determined. It is most likely that, in common with many others of His time in the Holy Land, to Him both Greek and Hebrew were equally familiar; that now He would use one tongue, now another. Still, brought up in a purely Jewish household, in remote Nazareth, amidst the cherished traditions belonging to the royal house of the people, we may in all reverence conclude that He thought in Hebrew, and perhaps more commonly communicated His blessed teachings in the same holy tongue. Certain it is, in this perhaps solitary instance of His speaking face to face with a mortal after His ascension to His glory-throne in Heaven, He used the Hebrew language, though addressing one who was a polished Greek scholar. Paul evidently thought and wrote

in Greek from preference. We speak of this appearance to Paul on the Damascus road as a solitary appearance of the risen and glorified Redeemer, for we have no other definite account of the glorified Lord after His ascension speaking to any mortal save in a dream or in the course of a trance or rapture.

The Apocalypse of St. John requires a few words. The apostle relates what he saw and heard when he was 'in the Spirit' on the Lord's day. These words evidently point to some state of rapture or trance into which John had fallen. But the whole of these Revelations, the thought and imagery, as well as the language, is so purely and exclusively Hebraistic, that the Greek record which we possess is apparently an account in one language of the words heard in another. St. John, for the sake of the countless Gentiles who believed (he wrote late in the first century), told his grand story in a tongue which he knew they could comprehend; but it is indeed more than probable that the Revelation came to him in Hebrew. Thus, Bengel's conclusion, that Hebrew was the language of the ever blessed Son of God, used in His dealings with men, whether speaking in His robes of humiliation on earth or from His glory-throne in Heaven, is supported by a mass of evidence supplied by a careful examination of the inspired Scriptures of the Old Testament compiled in different ages. The Scriptures of the New Testament, although written in Greek, complete the ample witness borne by the more ancient Divine writings.

#### EXCURSUS B.

#### THE MESSIAH OF DAVID AND THE PROPHETS CONTRASTED WITH THE MESSIAH OF THE JEWISH WRITERS WHO LIVED TWO OR THREE HUNDRED YEARS BEFORE THE 'INCARNATION.'

'The Book of Genesis,' writes Professor Westcott, 'connects the promise of redemption with the narrative of the fall. At each crisis in the providential history of the world this promise was brought within narrower limits, and illustrated by fresh details. After the flood, one of the sons of Noah was especially connected with the future triumph of God. Abraham was called, and the assurance was given him that the blessing of the earth should spring from his seed' (*Introduction to Study of the Gospels*). With the promise of redemption was bound up the sure hope of an eternal life beyond the grave. The thought of Messiah, and the endless life after death, were ever inseparably united in the hearts of the covenant people.

In the writings of Moses himself [Genesis was probably merely a compilation of his from earlier records], a nearer view is given of the coming Messiah. David and the other writers of the Psalms supply many more details of the person and office of the coming One; and the prophets, especially Isaiah, paint a picture so closely and even minutely resembling Him whom the so-called 'Christian' peoples have acknowledged as the 'Anointed One,' that their descriptions would have been certainly branded by unbelievers as a transparent imposture written *after* the life of Jesus of Nazareth, had not these descriptions of the prophets been guarded by the bitterest enemies of the Christians as their most precious treasure.

Now David and the various writers of the

Psalms, Isaiah, and the other prophets of the old covenant, who speak with detail of the Messiah who was to come, of His person, His work, and His office, not obscurely point out that in some mysterious way *suffering* and *self-sacrifice* was to be the means by which He was to accomplish His mighty task of restoration. It was the misfortunes of the chosen people—misfortunes brought on alone by their own wilfulness and hardness of heart—which changed completely their view of the expected Messiah. In the days of the monarchy, they were content, as we learn from the teachings of the Book of Psalms and the prophecies of Isaiah and his brother prophets, to look forward with loving trust to another life, after the fret and fever of this was passed, when under the rule of Messiah they would look on the face of the Eternal and be satisfied. But *after* the terrible calamities they endured at the hands of the Chaldeans and Egyptians, and last of all Roman oppressors, when the glory of their race seemed hopelessly dimmed, then, sore, discontented, burning for a change, they merged the hope of a calm, joyous eternity with God into a feverish longing for immediate revenge; and the restoration of the human race was forgotten in the intense desire for the restoration of the nation; while the scene of the future kingdom of King Messiah was laid no longer in heaven, but on earth.

What wonder is it that the lineaments of the picture of the glorious King as painted by David and Isaiah were changed? He whose visage was so marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men; He who hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows, emphatically the Man of Sorrows; the righteous servant of earlier and happier days, who through bearing their iniquities should justify many, passed out of sight, and only the glorious conqueror from Edom, red with the blood of His enemies, who were the enemies of His people, was the Messiah *now* passionately looked for by Israel.

We possess no contemporary literature of the days of David, Solomon, and Isaiah, like those works to which we are going to refer as representing the tone of public feeling among the Jews during the two or three centuries which immediately preceded the advent of Jesus of Nazareth. It is highly probable that, if we could now study the poetry, the religious meditation, the Apocalypse, even the historical portraiture composed in the days when David had established order and prosperity in the Land of Promise, in the glorious reign of Solomon, even in the later days of the divided monarchy, we should see that the idea of a suffering Messiah, of One who through self-sacrifice would redeem the people,—perhaps, so it would seem from Isaiah, a people far more numerous than the covenant race,—was by no means unknown or even unlooked for by the children of Israel.

We do, however, possess some precious relics of the literature of the later period, of those two centuries which preceded the birth of Jesus of Nazareth, of that sad and gloomy period when the Jew, sore, disheartened, embittered, looked only for a Messiah who should restore him, and at the same time avenge his cruel wrongs. A brief examination of some of these writings will throw a strong light on the Jewish state of mind which led them to reject the Lord Jesus, and after the furious burst of passion which led to His crucifixion, to persevere, as a nation, coldly, but at the same time with a strange, unnatural strength of purpose,

in their rejection of His message in the face of the most overwhelming evidence in its favour, so powerfully delivered by His chosen apostles. We shall see what was the spirit of the nation which bade them stone Stephen and hunt down Paul to the death, those most distinguished preachers of the suffering Messiah. Of the writings belonging to the two centuries immediately preceding our Lord's coming, we possess, as has been stated, some important fragments. [In Professor Westcott's *Introduction to the Study of the Gospels*, chap. ii., will be found a most interesting and exhaustive description of many of these writings.] A few brief extracts from these will give us some insight into the general tone of thought which characterised the more earnest and patriotic sections of Jewish society in that age. The Jewish Sibylline writings date from 160-140 B.C. The following striking prophetic passage well illustrates the hopes and expectations of the Jews for themselves, and sharply contrasts their own happy future lot with the doom of their Gentile persecutors. It concludes with a kind of solemn chorus of the Gentile nations in praise of the Jews who had won such love from God! God is to send from the sun a King (Messiah). Among the results of His advent among men, we read: 'The people of the mighty God shall be laden with noble wealth, with gold and silver, and with array of purple; and the earth shall bring forth to perfection, and the sea teeming with blessings . . . But, again, the kings of the Gentiles with gathered might shall assail this land, bringing fate upon themselves; for they shall wish to ravage the fold of the mighty God, and to destroy the noblest men . . . But swords of fire shall fall from heaven, and on earth great flames shall come . . . and every soul of man, and every sea shall shudder before the face of the Immortal . . . And then shall the foes of His people recognise the Immortal God, who brings these judgments to pass, and there shall be wailing and crying over the boundless earth, as men perish . . . But the sons of the mighty God around His temple all shall live in quiet . . . for the Immortal is their defender, and the hand of the Holy One. And then shall all the islands and cities say, How does the Immortal love these men, for all things strive with them and help them . . . !'

The Fourth Book of Esdras, composed probably early in the century preceding the birth of Jesus Christ, contains passages even more intensely 'Jewish' in character than the one above quoted. Terrible signs and awful calamities and woes are to usher in the blessings of Messiah's kingdom, but these blessings are reserved exclusively for the Jewish people. 'Now, O Lord,' asks the writer, 'if this world be made for our sakes . . . how long shall this (state, of things) endure . . . ? The Most High hath made this world for many, but the world to come for few . . .'

'There be many created, but few shall be saved.' 'For you is paradise opened, the tree of life is planted, the time to come is prepared . . . And, therefore, ask no more questions concerning the multitude of them that perish; nay, rather inquire how the righteous shall be saved, whose the world is and for whom the world is created.'

'When the cup of iniquity shall be full, then shall Messiah come.' 'The rest of My people shall He deliver with mercy, them that have been preserved in My judgments,' and 'He shall make

them joyful until the coming of the day of judgment, whereof I have spoken unto thee from the beginning.'

The 'Book of Jubilees' was put forth in the first century of the Christian era, at the very time when some of the events recorded in the 'Acts' were taking place. Not improbably the activity of Stephen and later of Paul called out this expression of national feeling. The spirit of exclusiveness which possessed the people during the two centuries which preceded the advent of Jesus of Nazareth is intensified. The hatred of the stranger and the alien is tenfold more bitter now that the new sect—who asserted that Messiah had come, and had offered a share in His kingdom to the dwellers in the isles of the Gentiles—was becoming a power in the world, and was beginning to gather into its ranks vast numbers of recreant Jews, who were content—strange madness as it seemed to these bigoted and fanatic zealots—to share their exclusive privileges with the accursed Gentiles.

It is intensely interesting for us to read such passages as the following, written perhaps by members of that very Sanhedrim who closed their ears at the blasphemy of Stephen with the 'angel face,' and asked the Roman Procurators Felix and Festus for the life of the hated Paul, and even condescended to use the Sicarii (assassins) as instruments to carry out their deadly purpose! See how this strange writing magnifies what Paul, in the Roman and Galatian Epistles, sets aside as having done its work, and tries to surround the worn-out and dying Law with a halo of glory it never possessed even in those stern days when it was ushered in amid the awful splendours of Sinai. 'The Sabbath, in this Book of Jubilees,' writes Westcott, 'appears as no earthly institution, but as ordained first for angels, and observed in Heaven before the creation of man. The very object for which the people of Israel was chosen was, that they might keep it. The *eating* of blood is an offence on the same level as the *shedding* of blood. The cruel deed of Simeon and Levi is blessed; and precedence over all men is given to Levi and his seed, and that they should "be as the angels of the presence." It is taught that the *Mosaic ordinances* were not only observed by the patriarchs, but written in heavenly tables and binding for ever.'

The resurrection from the dead, and an eternal life after death, evidently, as we have before asserted, formed part of the Jewish hopes in connection with Messiah; and no doubt, in the earlier and happier period of their history, these onlooks to the life beyond the grave with God were dwelt upon with joyful certainty (see below, on the testimony of the Psalms and Prophets); and even in these later times, as St. Paul repeatedly reminded them, they still formed part of the Jews' dearest hopes, although the passionate longing for revenge on the Gentiles, and the expectation of a brilliant earthly restoration, to a certain extent in these latter days (*i.e.* just before and after the coming of Jesus of Nazareth) obscured the hopes of a blessed eternity. In the Jewish Sibyl, for instance, we read how, after that fire shall have consumed land, and sea, and the firmament of Heaven, 'then no longer shall the laughing globes of the (heavenly) lights (roll on. There shall be) no night, no dawn, no many days of care, no spring, no summer, no winter, no autumn. And then shall the judgment of the mighty God come

in the midst of the mighty age when all these things come to pass.'

In the Book of Henoch, written about 107 B.C., occurs this passage: 'And in those days the earth shall give back that which has been entrusted to it, and the kingdom of death shall give back that which has been entrusted to it, and hell (Sheol) shall give back that which it owes. And (Messias) shall choose the righteous and holy among them, for the day is come that they should be delivered.'

Again, in the Fourth Book of Esdras we meet with the following remarkable statement respecting the resurrection and judgment: 'And the earth shall restore those that are asleep in her, and so shall the dust those that are in silence, and the secret places shall deliver those souls that were committed unto them. And the Most High shall appear upon the seat of judgment, and His mercy shall come (i.e. to the distressed faithful), and His clemency shall cease, and His long-suffering shall have an end; but judgment only shall remain, and truth shall stand, and faith shall bud, and the work shall follow, and the reward shall be showed, and justice shall watch, and injustice shall not slumber. For "the day of doom shall be the end of this time and the beginning of immortality for to come, wherein corruption is past."'

[Reference has been made above to the testimony borne by the Psalms and the Prophets to the general belief of the Jews in a resurrection and in a future life, which belief necessarily was closely connected with their Messianic hopes. Among the passages which bear with great distinctness on this subject are Ps. xvi. 11, a Messianic psalm; Ps. xvii. 15, where the joy of the beatific vision is unmistakably referred to; Ps. xxiii. 4, 6, where death and what happens after the dread moment are spoken of in words of the brightest, surest trust (see also Job xix. 23 to 27); Isa. lvi. 5, lxi. 17-25, lxvi. 22; Ezek. xxxvii. 1-10; Dan. vii. 13, 14, xii. 2, 3, etc.]

The advent of Jesus of Nazareth found the covenant people, as the Gospels—those faithful pictures of Israel during the first thirty-two years of the first Christian century—tell us, divided roughly into two great divisions, Pharisees and Sadducees. The first rigidly adhering to a law they misunderstood, and clinging to prophecies the burden of which they misinterpreted; the second, the rationalists of the first century, disbelieved much in the old story of Israel, and put aside the prophecies of the future, and probably only professed a partial belief in the loved story, because they felt that the fable, as they evidently considered it, was a powerful instrument for them to wield in their government of the masses. To the Pharisee party, however, belonged the majority of the people, perhaps the lower ranks and orders almost in their entirety. The Sadducees were few in number, and although consisting of families great and powerful in the state, never represented in any way the real mind of the people. At the time of the advent of Jesus of Nazareth, the Pharisee spirit was dominant in Israel. The Twelve, the holy women, the very brethren of Jesus according to the flesh, were in heart and training Pharisees. They looked on with, we may say, the greater part of Israel, to an avenging Messiah, to One who, in the face of Rome and the East, with a mighty outstretched Arm, should assert the solitary majesty of the people. And when the Master told those nearest to Him of His coming bitter

sufferings and awful death, we read how they were exceeding sorry (Matt. xvii. 23), and were even afraid to ask Him what He meant (Mark ix. 31, 32; Luke ix. 44, 45). Cleopas told the risen Lord how he and others had trusted that their Master had been He which should have redeemed Israel; but all their hopes had been disappointed when Jesus of Nazareth chose *rather to suffer than to reign*.

The marvellous success of the early Christian preaching had the effect of hardening the hearts of the people, who with each succeeding year, after the events of the first Pentecost related in Acts ii., clung closer to their own unhappy hopes. The Pharisee became a Zealot, and the last mad war with Rome was the natural result of the cherishing these false, unreal hopes. After the fall of the city and the temple, crushed and broken up, though not destroyed, in well-nigh all the great world cities, the dispersed of Israel, in sullen, despairing silence, waited for the long-hushed voice of Him who once loved them. But it came not. Their teachers still spoke of Messiah's coming, but only when the cup of the world's wickedness and misery should be full. Some Rabbis even declared that they wished not to behold the advent, so awful and widespread would be the misery which would herald the presence of the Deliverer.

Wilder and ever wilder, and more despairing, as time went on without a sign, grew the Messianic teaching among the old covenant people. Strange fancies took the place of prediction, and hope seems to have given place to despair. Some said He came to His own on the day of the destruction of the temple (A.D. 70), but was carried away again, to be revealed at his own time. Others said, 'He is with us now, sitting among the poor and wounded at the gates of Rome, and men knew Him not.' [Compare Westcott's *Introduction to the Study of the Gospels*, where more of these later traditions are given, chap. ii., 'The Jewish Doctrine of Messiah.']

All this explains how it came to pass that Jesus of Nazareth was rejected as Messiah by the Jews, to whom He presented Himself; and tells us, too, why He was not only rejected, but even thrust aside with fiery indignation as positively contradicting the cherished hope which had buoyed up their fainting hearts through many a long and weary year of oppression and indignity. All this throws a strong, fierce light on the crucifixion of the Lover and Friend of man, whom blinded Israel hated as a blasphemer of God and a traitor to Israel, and explains the murder of Stephen, and their relentless hatred of Paul.

The above brief dissertation on the state of the Jewish mind at the time of, and for some two hundred years before the advent of the Lord Jesus, is not intended in any way as an apology for the rejection and crucifixion of the blessed Son of God, but simply to show that *what happened* was precisely what the state of public and private feeling among the people at that time would have led us to expect. The whole history of the chosen people leads up to Calvary. It is not for us to extenuate, still less would it become us to cast our stone at that strange, unhappy people. We have only to tell the story, and leave the rest to that Master who, 'when Israel was a child, then He loved him,' and, we are persuaded, *still* loves, and from His glory-throne in heaven *still* watches over

the fortunes of that wandering erring race, who left Him to die on His cross, but who in the ages will again return to Him, and with mourning no pen can write, and with joy no stammering tongue of earth describe, will look with adoration for ever and for ever on Him whom they pierced. But this is still to come. Messiah's words are yet in process of fulfilment. 'O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate' (Matt. xxiii. 37, 38).

## EXCURSUS C.

ON THE THREE ACCOUNTS OF ST. PAUL'S  
CONVERSION.

In an Excursus above, on the two accounts of the conversion of Cornelius, it was remarked that in that case, as in this, we have before us something more than a mere repetition of the same facts for the sake of emphasis. If indeed there were, in these instances, mere reiteration on the part of St. Peter and St. Paul, in important speeches, of narratives previously given, we should have no ground for feeling difficulty or for casting any imputation upon the authenticity of the Acts of the Apostles. But, in fact, there is much more than reiteration in these cases. The same story is indeed, in each instance, told more than once; but it is so re-told as to have in the re-telling a distinct relation with both the speakers and the audience. Thus we gain, in the most lively manner, additional information through this re-statement; while a comparison of the speeches with the circumstances under which they were delivered, supplies us with a test, by the help of which we can judge of the natural truthfulness of these parts of the Book of the Acts.

In the accounts given of St. Paul's addresses in the Temple Court at Jerusalem, and before the Roman governor at Cæsarea (chaps. xxii., xxvi.), as when St. Peter spoke before the apostles and brethren at Jerusalem (chap. xi.), we find him speaking under apologetic conditions. He himself (xxii. 1, xxvi. 2) terms those addresses 'defences.' Hence we might expect that on these occasions certain things would be omitted which, though important in the direct narrative, have no apologetic value; and, on the other hand, that certain things would be added likely to be specially persuasive to the audiences respectively addressed. And this we find to be the case. Thus, in St. Paul's speeches, nothing is said of the sensation of 'scales, as it were, falling from his eyes,' when Ananias was sent to relieve him of his blindness. Such a point of detail is quite after St. Luke's medical manner, and has great interest for us on this account; but it would have been out of place in a defensive address, spoken under difficult circumstances. Similarly we find in the speeches no mention of the 'Straight Street,' or of 'the house of Judas.' Such local details, as in the case of Peter speaking at Jerusalem, would have been of no special value in Paul's speeches in the Temple Court, or at Cæsarea. Again, St. Paul does not tell the Jews or Festus that he was 'three days without food;' and once more we may refer to St. Peter's omitting such particulars when he is defending himself before

his brother-apostles. And now, to turn from omissions to additions, we observe that it is only from the apologetic speeches that we learn that 'the light from heaven,' which suddenly shone upon St. Paul on the way to Damascus, was a 'great' light, 'about noon' (xxii. 6), 'above the brightness of the sun' (xxvi. 13), and that 'he could not see for the glory of that light' (xxii. 11). It was of the utmost consequence that he should impress his hearers with the miraculous nature of that which had occurred to him, whereas St. Luke wrote simply and calmly on this aspect of the case; and thus it is that we obtain most interesting particulars which otherwise we should not have known.

Turning now to the speeches as compared with one another, we must remember that, though both were apologetic, they were apologetic under very different circumstances. If they were true to the occasions on which they are alleged to have been spoken, and true also to the character of the speaker as a man of good judgment and fine tact, they must exhibit corresponding variations. Now, speaking to the angry Jewish mob in the Temple Court, it was essential that St. Paul should be conciliatory, by presenting his subject as much as possible on the Jewish side, and keeping back as long as possible that mention of the Gentiles which was peculiarly offensive to them. He does this with remarkable skill. His speaking in the Hebrew tongue (xxi. 40, xxii. 2), instantly after speaking to the Roman officer in Greek (xxi. 37), is to be noted, in the first place, as a mark of his ready versatility. He addresses his angry hearers as 'brethren and fathers.' He tells them that, though born in Tarsus, he was educated in Jerusalem (ver. 3). Were it not for this speech, we should never have known that St. Paul was 'brought up at the feet of Gamaliel.' He calls the law which he had been taught 'the law of the fathers;' and he says that he had been zealous 'as they all were that day.' He says that 'all the estate of the elders,' some of whom were doubtless present, had sanctioned his persecuting journey to Damascus. He describes those to whom he took these letters as 'brethren' (ver. 5). When he comes to the mention of Ananias, he describes him not (as in ix. 10) under the designation of a Christian 'disciple,' but as 'a devout man according to the law;' and he adds, just as in x. 22 the messengers to Peter make a similar addition regarding Cornelius, that 'he had a good report of all that dwelt there' (ver. 12). The coming of Ananias and his standing over him, and his own looking up into the face of his visitor, should be noted as specimens of the vivid language of one who is telling his own story. The words in which Ananias is quoted as saying, 'The God of our fathers hath chosen thee,' is, once more, an indication of the conciliatory skill with which the apostle speaks, as is his withholding the express mention of the Gentiles, when Ananias says, 'Thou shalt be His witness unto all men' (ver. 15). But especially we must mark his introduction of his vision in the Temple, of which, but for this speech, we should have known nothing (ver. 17). In that very same sacred place where he was now speaking, God had spoken to him, and had given him his commission to the Gentiles (ver. 21). At that detested word the uproar began again, and they would hear him no longer. But he had gained his point. He had told the story of his conversion to

those who were most unwilling to listen. It is needless to observe how much this speech adds to the story, as given in the ninth chapter, of that great charge and its collateral circumstances, and how all these additions arise naturally out of the occasion taken in conjunction with the character of the man.

If now we turn to the speech before Festus and Agrippa, we find the story of the conversion told with what might be termed a strong Gentile colouring; and this was in harmony with the occasion, and quite according to the tone and habit of St. Paul's mind and character. He easily adapted himself to the circumstances of the moment. He can now speak calmly and deliberately, and without any of that urgent pressure which caused so much difficulty in the Court of the Temple. He has the religious interests of Festus, too, to consider; and it is his duty so to speak as to persuade him, if possible, as well as Agrippa. Thus he says that he was 'accused by Jews' (xxvi. 2),—accused by them, too, for promoting 'the hope' which their 'twelve tribes' had always fostered (vers. 6, 7). He speaks of them as hostile to him, not as friends. He places them, as it were, outside of the position in which he himself stands. He describes the Christians whom he persecuted as 'saints' (ver. 10); he says that he endeavoured to force them to 'blaspheme' (ver. 11). No such language would have been possible before the

Jewish mob; or, at least, if he had used it, the interruption and uproar would have been hastened. He makes no mention here at Cæsarea of the vision of Ananias at Damascus, or of his own vision in the temple of Jerusalem. Such statements would have been of no use in his argument, and they might have provoked derision. Throughout we observe that his mission to the Gentiles is made conspicuous (vers. 17, 20, 23); and to close this imperfect comparison of the two speeches by noticing one particular, which at first sight is very trivial, but which really contains a great deal of evidential force, he says here (ver. 14) that the voice on the road to Damascus spoke to him 'in the Hebrew tongue.' He did not state this while addressing the mob in the Temple Court; and for two reasons this difference is entirely natural. He was then speaking in Hebrew; he is now speaking in Greek.

This unfolding of the difference which subsists among the three accounts of St. Paul's conversion, and of the undesigned evidence of truthfulness which those differences involve, is by no means exhaustive. But the reader may be tempted to follow the same course of comparison more minutely for himself. See, for a further treatment of the subject, the *Hulsean Lectures for 1862* (third edition), by the writer of this note, and likewise his Second Appendix to the edition of the *Horæ Paulinæ* recently published by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

### *Voyage from Cæsarea by Myra to Fair Havens—Violent and Prolonged Storm—Anchoring in the Night—Shipwreck on the Coast of Malta.*

- 1 **A**ND when <sup>a</sup> it was determined that we should sail into <sup>b</sup> Italy, they delivered Paul and certain other prisoners  
 2 unto *one* named Julius, a centurion <sup>1</sup> of Augustus' <sup>c</sup> band.<sup>2</sup> And  
 entering into a ship of Adramyttium, we launched, meaning <sup>d</sup>  
 to sail by the coasts of <sup>e</sup> Asia; *one* <sup>f</sup> Aristarchus, a Macedonian  
 3 of <sup>g</sup> Thessalonica, being with us. And the next *day* we touched  
 at <sup>h</sup> Sidon. And Julius <sup>i</sup> courteously entreated Paul, and <sup>j</sup> gave  
 4 *him* liberty to go unto *his* friends to refresh himself. And  
 when we had launched <sup>k</sup> from thence, we <sup>l</sup> sailed under <sup>m</sup> Cyprus,  
 5 because the winds were contrary. And when we had sailed  
 over the sea of <sup>n</sup> Cilicia and Pamphylia, we came to Myra, *a*  
 6 *city* of Lycia. And there the centurion found <sup>o</sup> a ship of  
 7 Alexandria sailing into <sup>p</sup> Italy; and he put us therein. And  
 when we had sailed slowly many days, and scarce <sup>q</sup> were come

<sup>1</sup> better, 'to a centurion, Julius by name,' etc.

<sup>2</sup> better, 'of the Augustan cohort.'

<sup>3</sup> According to the more ancient authorities, the translation should run, 'And having embarked in a ship . . . which was on the point of sailing to the places along the coasts of Asia, we set sail,' etc. <sup>4</sup> or better, 'and having set sail.'

<sup>5</sup> Instead of 'of Cilicia,' etc., render 'off Cilicia,' etc.

<sup>6</sup> better rendered, 'with difficulty.'

<sup>a</sup> Ch. xxv. 12, 25.

<sup>b</sup> Ver. 6. See Heb. xiii. 24.

<sup>c</sup> See Jo. xviii. 3.

<sup>d</sup> See ch. ii. 9. <sup>e</sup> See ch. xix. 29.

<sup>f</sup> Ch. xx. 4. <sup>g</sup> See ch. xvii. 1.

<sup>h</sup> See Lu. iv. 26.

<sup>i</sup> So ch. xxviii. 2 (Gk.) Cp ver. 43.

<sup>j</sup> Cp. ch. xxiv. 25, xxviii. 19.

<sup>k</sup> Ver. 7. Cp. ch. xxi. 3.

<sup>l</sup> with ver. 5. <sup>m</sup> See ch. iv. 36.

<sup>n</sup> Ch. xxviii. 11. <sup>o</sup> See ch. vi. 9.

- over against <sup>a</sup> Cnidus, the wind not suffering us, we <sup>k</sup> sailed <sup>a</sup> Ver. 4.  
 8 under <sup>o</sup> Crete, over against Salmone; And hardly <sup>g</sup> <sup>h</sup> passing it, <sup>o</sup> Vers. 12, 13, 21. See ch. ii. 10. <sup>h</sup> Ver. 13 (Gk.).  
 came unto a place *which is* called The Fair Havens; nigh where-  
 9 unto was the city of Lasea. Now when much time was spent,  
 and when sailing <sup>7</sup> was now dangerous, because the fast was  
 10 now already past, Paul admonished *them*, And said unto them,  
 Sirs, I perceive that *this* voyage will be with <sup>g</sup> hurt and much <sup>g</sup> Ver. 21 (Gk.).  
<sup>g</sup> damage, not only of the lading and ship, but also of our  
 11 lives. Nevertheless the centurion believed the <sup>r</sup> master and the <sup>r</sup> Rev. xviii. 27 (Gk.).  
 owner of the ship, more than those *things* which were spoken  
 12 by Paul. And because the haven was not commodious to  
 winter in, the more part advised to depart <sup>8</sup> thence also, if by  
 any means they might attain to Phenice, <sup>9</sup> *and there* to winter;  
*which is* a haven of <sup>o</sup> Crete, and lieth toward <sup>10</sup> the south-west  
 13 and north-west. And when the south wind blew softly, sup-  
 posing that *they* had obtained *their* <sup>g</sup> purpose, loosing <sup>11</sup> *thence*, <sup>g</sup> So ch. xi. 23. See Rom. viii. 28.  
 14 they <sup>h</sup> sailed close by <sup>o</sup> Crete. But not long after there arose <sup>12</sup>  
 15 against it a tempestuous wind, called Euroclydon. And when  
 the ship was caught, and could not bear up into the wind, we  
 16 let *her* drive.<sup>13</sup> And running under a certain island *which is*  
 17 called Clauda, we had much work to come by the boat: Which  
 when they had taken up, they used helps, undergirding the  
 ship; and fearing lest they should <sup>4</sup> fall into the quicksands,<sup>14</sup> <sup>g</sup> Gk. as vers. 26, 29.  
 18 strake sail,<sup>15</sup> and so were driven. And we being exceedingly  
 tossed with a tempest, the next *day* they <sup>h</sup> lightened the ship;  
 19 And the third *day* we <sup>16</sup> <sup>h</sup> cast out with our own hands the  
 20 tackling of the ship. And when neither sun nor stars in many  
 days appeared, and no small tempest lay on *us*, all hope <sup>17</sup> that  
 21 we should be saved was then taken away. But after long  
 abstinence Paul stood *forth* in the midst of them, and said, Sirs,  
<sup>g</sup> *ye* should have hearkened unto me, and not have loosed <sup>18</sup>  
 22 from <sup>o</sup> Crete, and to have gained this <sup>g</sup> harm and <sup>g</sup> loss. And  
 now I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no  
 23 loss of *any man's* life among you, but <sup>19</sup> of the ship. For  
<sup>h</sup> there <sup>h</sup> stood by me this night *the* <sup>20</sup> angel of God, <sup>h</sup> whose I  
 24 am, and <sup>h</sup> whom I serve, Saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be  
 brought <sup>21</sup> before Cæsar: and lo, God hath <sup>g</sup> given thee all them  
<sup>7</sup> *more accurately rendered*, 'and when the voyage.' <sup>8</sup> *better*, 'to sail thence.'  
<sup>9</sup> *better*, 'Phœnix.' <sup>10</sup> *more accurately rendered*, 'looking toward.'  
<sup>11</sup> *better rendered*, 'having weighed anchor, they coasted close to Crete.'  
<sup>12</sup> *more accurately*, 'there rushed down from it.'  
<sup>13</sup> *more accurately*, 'we yielded to it, and were driven.'  
<sup>14</sup> *more accurately*, 'lest they should fall on the Syrtis.'  
<sup>15</sup> *more accurately*, 'having lowered the tackling.'  
<sup>16</sup> *Some of the older authorities read here*, 'they cast out,' etc.  
<sup>17</sup> *more accurately*, 'henceforth all hope,' etc.  
<sup>18</sup> *better rendered*, 'and not have set sail from Crete,' etc.  
<sup>19</sup> *better*, 'but only of the ship.' <sup>20</sup> *more accurately*, 'an angel of God.'  
<sup>21</sup> *better*, 'thou must stand before.'



- 25 that sail with thee. Wherefore, sirs, <sup>b</sup> be of good cheer: <sup>c</sup> for <sup>b</sup> Ver. 22.  
 26 I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me. How- <sup>c</sup> So ver. 36.  
 beit <sup>d</sup> we must be <sup>e</sup> cast upon a certain island. <sup>d</sup> Ch. xviii. 1  
 27 But when the fourteenth night was come, as we were driven  
 up and down in Adria,<sup>22</sup> about midnight the shipmen <sup>23</sup> deemed  
 28 that they drew near to some country; And sounded, and found  
<sup>it</sup> twenty fathoms: and when they had gone a little further,  
 29 they sounded again, and found <sup>it</sup> fifteen fathoms. Then fearing  
 lest we <sup>24</sup> should have <sup>e</sup> fallen upon rocks, they cast four anchors <sup>e</sup> Vers. 17, 29  
 30 out of the stern, and wished for the day. And as the shipmen <sup>25</sup> (Gk.).  
 were about to flee out of the ship, when they had let down <sup>c</sup> So ver. 32.  
<sup>f</sup> the boat into the sea, <sup>e</sup> under colour as though they would <sup>f</sup> Ver. 16.  
 31 have cast anchors out of the foreship, Paul said to the centurion <sup>g</sup> Jo. xv. 22  
 and to the soldiers, Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot (Gk.).  
 32 be saved. Then the soldiers cut off the <sup>h</sup> ropes of the boat, and <sup>h</sup> Jo. ii. 15  
 33 <sup>i</sup> let her <sup>e</sup> fall off. And while the day was coming on, Paul <sup>i</sup> (Gk.).  
 besought *them* all to take meat, saying, This day is the <sup>j</sup> Ch. v. 38  
 fourteenth day that ye have tarried and continued fasting,  
 34 having taken nothing. Wherefore I pray you to take *some*  
 meat: for this is for your health: for <sup>k</sup> there shall not a hair <sup>k</sup> See 1 Sam.  
 35 fall <sup>26</sup> from the head of any of you. And when he had thus <sup>l</sup> xiv. 45.  
 spoken, he took bread, and <sup>i</sup> gave thanks to God in presence of <sup>l</sup> See Mat. xv.  
 36 *them* all: and when he had broken <sup>it</sup>, he began to eat. Then <sup>m</sup> 36.  
 were they all <sup>b</sup> of good cheer, and they also took *some* meat.  
 37 And we were in all in the ship two hundred threescore *and*  
 38 sixteen <sup>n</sup> souls. And when they had eaten enough, <sup>n</sup> they <sup>m</sup> Ch. ii. 41,  
 39 lightened the ship, and cast out the wheat into the sea. And <sup>o</sup> vii. 14;  
 when it was day, they knew not the land: but they discovered <sup>p</sup> 1 Pet. iii. 20.  
 a certain creek with a shore,<sup>27</sup> into <sup>28</sup> the which they were <sup>q</sup> So Rom. xiii.  
 40 minded, if it were possible, to thrust <sup>29</sup> in the ship. And when <sup>r</sup> 1: Jas. v. 20.  
 they had taken up <sup>30</sup> <sup>n</sup> the anchors, they committed <sup>31</sup> *themselves* <sup>s</sup> Ver. 29.  
 unto the sea, and <sup>o</sup> loosed the rudder bands, and hoised up the <sup>t</sup> Cp. ver. 17.  
 41 mainsail <sup>32</sup> to the wind, and made toward shore.<sup>33</sup> And falling  
 into a place where two seas met, <sup>2</sup> they ran the ship aground; <sup>u</sup> 2 Cor. xi. 25  
 and the fore part <sup>34</sup> stuck fast, and remained unmoveable, but  
 the hinder part <sup>35</sup> was broken with the violence of the waves.  
 42 And the soldiers' counsel was to kill the prisoners, lest any of  
 43 *them* should swim out, and escape. But the centurion, <sup>q</sup> willing <sup>v</sup> Cp. ver. 3.

<sup>22</sup> better, 'in the Adriatic.'<sup>23</sup> better, 'the sailors thought.'<sup>24</sup> *The English Version*, 'we should have fallen,' is the rendering, not of the Received Text, but is apparent by the rendering from the older authorities.<sup>25</sup> better, 'as the sailors were seeking to flee.'<sup>26</sup> *The older authorities* read 'perish from the head' instead of 'fall from the head,' etc. <sup>27</sup> better, 'with a beach.'<sup>28</sup> better, 'upon which.'<sup>29</sup> better, 'to drive the ship.'<sup>30</sup> better, 'and having cut away.'<sup>31</sup> *Render* 'they left them in the sea,' or 'they let them fall into the sea.'<sup>32</sup> more accurately, 'the foresail.'<sup>33</sup> better, 'they made toward the beach.'<sup>34</sup> better, 'and the bow.'<sup>35</sup> better, 'but the stern.'

to save Paul, kept them from *their* purpose; and commanded that they which could swim should cast *themselves* first into the  
 44 sea, and get to land: And the rest, some on boards,<sup>36</sup> and some on broken pieces of the ship. And so it came to pass, <sup>r</sup> that <sup>r</sup> Ver. 22. they escaped all safe to land.

<sup>36</sup> better, 'some on planks.'

Ver. 1. When it was determined. It might seem that there had been some doubt whether the apostle after all was to be sent *into Italy*. Festus indeed had, in the first instance, decided on this course (xxv. 12); but after a careful consultation with Agrippa (xxv. 14-22), and after a full hearing of St. Paul in Agrippa's presence (xxvi. 1-29), serious doubt was expressed (xxvi. 32) whether this was really a case for appeal to the emperor. The word *ispitōn*, however, may only mean that time for going to Italy was now fixed.

Certain other prisoners. Who they were, and under what circumstances they were going to Rome, we do not know. The same opportunity which was available for conveying any one group of prisoners would naturally be used for conveying others. See below on the next verse.

One named Julius, a centurion. Rather, 'a centurion named Julius.' The name being merely a prænomen, determines nothing. It may be remarked, however, that the Julian house, like the Cornelian (x. 1), was an illustrious one in Italy. As to this Julius personally, we presently feel that we know a good deal of him through his character and his treatment of St. Paul. Like other centurions mentioned in the New Testament (Matt. xv. 10; Mark xv. 39; Acts x. 1), he commands our respect. We should especially compare the case of Cornelius in his connection with St. Peter.

Of Augustus's band. More correctly, 'of the Augustan cohort.' Josephus tells us (*War*, ii. 12, 7, and ii. 12, 5) that one cohort of the Roman garrison at Cæsarea in the time of Felix had this title, though most of the soldiers were recruited in Syria. Various cohorts, as well as legions, had honorary titles. We have an instance in Acts x. 1. We must not, however, identify the *Italic cohort* and the *Augustan cohort*. It is possible that the corps to which Julius belonged was a detachment of the Prætorian Guards. That he had an escort of soldiers with him is clear from vers. 31, 32. Dr. Hackett gives a good illustration of the position of these detached Roman cohorts from Lord Macaulay, where he speaks of 'a troop of dragoons, which did not form part of any regiment, as stationed near Berwick for the purpose of keeping the peace among the moss-troopers of the Border.'

#### *Voyage to Myra, 2-5.*

Ver. 2. A ship of Adramyttium. It is to be observed that St. Paul's voyage to Italy was accomplished in three ships. The first ship was probably merely a coasting vessel, carrying passengers and cargo, and touching at various ports. The reason why this ship of Adramyttium was used by Julius is given. The true reading is *μικλοτέρα*. She was bound for 'the ports which are in the

neighbourhood of Asia.' Here Reuss makes two mistakes. He says of Adramyttium that it was 'Ville de la côte meridionale de l'Asie Mineure.' Now the 'Asia' of the New Testament is not the peninsula of Asia Minor, but merely the western portion of that peninsula; and Adramyttium is not on the southern coast of Asia Minor, but on its western coast, some considerable distance northward, opposite the island of Lesbos. As far, however, as the south-western angle of the peninsula, the course of this vessel was in the direction of Italy; and in some of the harbours at which it would touch in its way, Julius might expect to find another western-bound ship in which he and his prisoners could pursue their voyage. Even military officers in high command, on important errands, were obliged in that day to employ opportunities of that kind, and to accomplish long voyages by circuitous methods, using one ship after another, besides being dependent on the weather. A good illustration is supplied by Josephus (*War*, vii. 2, 1) in his account of the voyage of Vespasian himself, who went on board a merchant ship from Alexandria to Rhodes, and thence pursued his way through Greece to the Adriatic, and finally went to Rome through Italy by land.

One Aristarchus, a Macedonian, of Thessalonica. There is no reason why the word 'one' should be prefixed in the Authorised Version. Aristarchus was one of the apostle's well-known companions. He was with him at Ephesus during the earlier part of his Last Missionary Journey (xix. 29), and he was also with him on his return in the later part (xx. 4). In the first of these passages he is described as a Macedonian; in the second, it is said more specifically that he was from Thessalonica. It is important to add that he appears as one of St. Paul's companions in Rome at the close of this voyage. In one of the epistles written there during his imprisonment, St. Paul terms Aristarchus his 'fellow-prisoner' (Col. iv. 10), and in another his 'fellow-worker' (Philem. 24). Thus the companionship of the two was close and prolonged. In each case, too, it is to be noted that Aristarchus and Luke are both mentioned as being with St. Paul in Rome. See Col. iv. 14. So far as we know, Aristarchus and Luke were his only companions on the departure from Cæsarea.

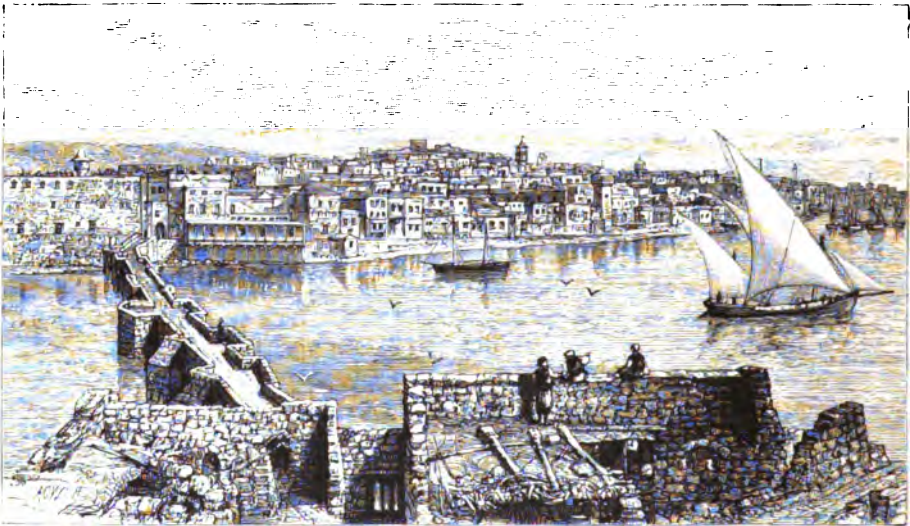
Ver. 3. The next day we touched at Sidon. With a favourable wind this would be very easy. The distance was only sixty-seven miles; and six knots an hour would, as we shall see below, be under the natural speed of the ship under such circumstances. But a question arises here. Sidon lay due north of Cæsarea on the Phœnician coast, and the course to 'the neighbourhood of Asia' was west-north-west. We do not know all the circumstances of the case; but very good reasons can

be given why the vessel should have touched at Sidon. She might have had passengers or merchandise to land or to take on board there. But other reasons can be given of a physical kind. We know from what follows that 'the wind was contrary on leaving Sidon, and sufficiently strong also to force the vessel to take the northern side of Cyprus. Now, we learn from nautical authorities that north-westerly winds are prevalent in that part of the Levant. Moreover, a strong current sets to the north along the Phœnician coast, and is favourable to the progress of a ship in that direction. Hence it is very probable that the wind was blowing hard from the north-west from the first, and nothing was more natural than that the vessel should go into harbour at Sidon, even if no business required her presence there.

**Julius courteously entreated** (i.e. *treated*) **Paul**. Already we have a strong indication of the centurion's friendly disposition, and of the

influence gained by the apostle over him. It is highly probable that Julius had obtained in Cæsarea some knowledge of the character of St. Paul, and of the circumstances of his imprisonment, and even that he was there personally acquainted with him. See the special reference to military quarters in Acts xxiii. 31-35, and compare xxiv. 23.

**His friends.** St. Paul's name would be quite sufficient to secure the friendship of any Christians at Sidon. But it is almost certain that he had personal friends there. The Gospel had been actively diffused along this part of the coast, soon after the persecution which resulted in the death of Stephen (Acts xi. 19). Barnabas had been sent along this coast from Jerusalem when news came of successful evangelization in Antioch (xi. 22), and he was directed to spread the Gospel as he went (see the note on that passage). And again, it was along the same route that Barnabas and Saul afterwards took the charitable relief from Antioch to



Sidon.

**Judæa.** The Roman way by Tyre and Sidon was a well travelled road, with frequent communication among the towns which lay along the line. St. Paul himself had very recently been at Tyre (xxi. 3), as well as at Ptolemais (xxi. 7), and had held affectionate intercourse with the Christians at both places.

**To refresh himself.** More literally, *to obtain friendly care*. Two particulars here naturally suggest themselves. First, we know that St. Paul had experience of delicate health; and this state of suffering must have been aggravated by his imprisonment of two years (xxiv. 27) at Cæsarea. Secondly, he had a long and circuitous voyage in prospect, at a bad season of the year; and some provision for his comfort was by no means a matter of light importance (see 2 Tim. iv. 13, 21).

**Ver. 4. Sailed under Cyprus.** The reason is given presently afterwards. The meaning is, that they sailed 'under the lee of Cyprus,' or so as to place the island between themselves and the wind. To suppose that 'under' means 'to the

south of' Cyprus, is a mere confusion of thought, arising probably from our habit of placing the north at the top of our maps and the south at the bottom. The natural course for this ship would have been on the south of Cyprus, towards the south-west corner of Asia Minor, the course followed inversely on St. Paul's return from his Last Missionary Expedition, on which occasion the sighting of Cyprus to the north is mentioned (Acts xxi. 6).

**Because the winds were contrary.** Hence the wind was blowing hard from the north-west (see note above). This was a sufficient reason for standing to the north, and then following the coast of the mainland westwards. And this reason was, of course, freely mentioned among those who were on board the ship. But some other reasons doubtless weighed with those who had charge of the sailing of the ship, to bring about this determination. The current which, as mentioned above, sets northward along the Syrian coast, to the east of Cyprus, sets westward between that island and

the Cilician and Pamphylian coast. Admiral Beaufort says (*Karamania*, p. 41), that 'from Syria to the Archipelago, there is a constant current to the westward.' This would be favourable to the progress of the vessel. Moreover, the wind would draw more from the north when coming down from the high land above this coast. This is stated in our English *Sailing Directory*, pp. 241-243. Hence there would be comparatively smooth water here. This coast, too, had several good harbours. All these things were known to sailors accustomed to the navigation of the Levant.

Ver. 5. The sea of Cilicia and Pamphylia. The exactitude of this geographical order, and the perfectly artless manner in which this exactitude appears, should be marked.

Myra, a city of Lycia. Again we should notice the placing of Lycia correctly, yet without any artifice, immediately to the west of Pamphylia. As to Myra, this was a well-known seafaring town in the day of St. Paul. It is worth while to observe that Nicholas, one of its Christian bishops in the fourth century, became in the Middle Ages the favourite patron saint of sailors.

*Voyage from Myra to Fair Havens, 6-8.*

Ver. 6. A ship of Alexandria sailing into Italy.

The centurion obtained here, what he expected he might obtain in one of the harbours along this coast, a new opportunity for prosecuting his voyage farther towards Italy. This opportunity was afforded by the ship bound for Italy, which he found in port at Myra. It evidently was a large and commodious ship; for there were 276 persons on board at the time of the wreck, as we learn afterwards (ver. 37). The majority of these, of course, were passengers. It is a popular fallacy to suppose that the trading ships of the Mediterranean, under the Roman Empire, were necessarily small craft. We have abundant proof that they were often of 500 or 1000 tons. This would especially be the case with the great corn ships of Alexandria, which took grain from Egypt to Rome and the other large towns of Italy; and this, as we learn from the subsequent narrative, was one of that class (ver. 38). Another Alexandrian ship (xxviii. 11) took these people on board, besides

her own crew and passengers. See the Excursus at the end of the chapter.

A question, indeed, arises here, as to why this Alexandrian corn ship was found in harbour at Myra. She was bound for Italy, which is far to the west, and Myra is nearly due north of Alexandria. This question, however, is very easily answered. Independently of the possibility that there might be passengers to be landed at this port, we must remember that the wind had been blowing for some time from the north-west, and that what was unfavourable to 'the ship of Adramyttium,' was



Coin of Myra.

equally unfavourable to 'the ship of Alexandria.' Thus it was extremely natural that a vessel bound from Egypt to Italy should stand to the north, where the Asiatic coast is high and easily seen, where good harbours are abundant, and where the above described advantages as to wind and water would be found. And this is in strict accordance with the practice, under such circumstances, of modern sailing ships in the Levant.

Ver. 7. Sailed slowly. If, as is said in what immediately follows, 'many days' had passed after leaving Myra, while yet they 'scarce were come over against Cnidus,' they must have sailed 'slowly;' for the distance from Myra to Cnidus is only 137 miles. The question arises as to the cause of this slow sailing. It must have been either from lack of wind, or because the wind

was contrary; and when we take into account, all that has been said above, we can have no doubt that the latter reason is the true one. Moreover, the Greek word *μῆλις*, translated 'scarce,' really expresses difficulty and struggle. It would be necessary, along the Lycian coast, as previously along the Cilician and Pamphylian, for



Corn Ship of Alexandria.

the ship to beat up against the wind, with tacks, speaking roughly, north-east by north and south-west by west.

The wind not suffering us. A question might be raised here as to whether this means that the wind would not allow them to enter the harbour of Cnidus, or would not allow them to make the southernmost point of the Morea, which was in their direct route to Italy. Mr. Humphry takes the former view, adding that in the harbour of Cnidus, which was a good one, they would probably have wintered, if they had been able to enter

it. But it does not appear that at this time they had relinquished their intention of prosecuting their voyage. Reuss supposes that they were hindered from entering the port of Cnidus, because the wind was from the *north-east*, but this supposition is at variance with all the other circumstances of this part of the voyage. The other view is by far the more probable.

**Sailed under Crete, i.e. under its lee.** Here they would obtain the same advantages as before, under the shore of Asia Minor, as to comparative shelter and a favourable current.

**Over against Salmone.** This promontory is the easternmost point of Crete.

**Ver. 8. Hardly passing it.** The word here again is *μάλισ*, which expresses difficulty. It seems that they were hardly able to accomplish their purpose: but they did accomplish it; and from this circumstance, added to the fact that they could not fetch the southernmost point of the Morea, Mr. Smith of Jordanhill has drawn an ingenious indirect proof confirming the evidence that the wind was blowing from the north-west. The argument shall be given in his own words: 'The direct course of a ship on her voyage from Myra to Italy,

after she had reached Cnidus, is by the north side of Crete, through the Archipelago, west by south. Hence a ship which can make good a course of about seven points from the wind, would not have been prevented from proceeding on her course unless the wind had been to the west of north-north-west. We are next told that she ran "under Crete, over against Salmone," which implies that she was able to fetch that cape, which bears about south-west by south from Cnidus; but unless the wind had been to the north of north-north-west, she could not have done so. The wind was, therefore, between north-north-west and west-north-west. The middle point between the points is north-west, which cannot be more than two points, and is probably not more than one, from the true direction. The wind, therefore, would in common language have been termed north-west.'

**A place which is called the Fair Havens.** This place, on the south coast of Crete, is well known, and has always, up to the present day, retained the same name. It lies a few miles to the east of Cape Matala, beyond which (westwards) the coast suddenly trends to the north.



Fair Havens.

**High whereunto is the city of Lasea.** The proximity of this town to the roadstead of Fair Havens, evidently attracted the attention of St. Luke and of the others who were on board. The natives of the place would bring supplies to their ship when she was anchored in the roadstead. But the very name and existence of Lasea have remained unknown until recently, except through very obscure and precarious intimations. Now, however, both the name and the ruins of Lasea have been found precisely in the right place. This curious discovery of a Scotch yachting party may be classed among the really valuable geographical evidences of the truth of the Bible which have been accumulating of late years. See Appendix to recent edition of *Horæ Paulinæ* issued by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.

*Stay at Fair Havens—Determination to reach Phanix, if possible, 9-12.*

**Ver. 9. Much time.** It is impossible to say precisely how long this time was. Such terms are always relative to the circumstances of the case to which they belong. It is evident from what

follows, that continued delay now began to involve considerable anxiety.

**Sailing was now dangerous.** The more correct translation is, '*the further prosecution of the voyage being now dangerous.*' It would be quite a mistake to suppose that the old navigators were afraid to try the open sea. We have an instance of a perfectly free and open voyage of this kind in St. Paul's return from his last missionary expedition (Acts xxi. 2, 3). But in this case a long voyage was in prospect, and the season was very stormy. The sky might be expected to be overcast. What the old sailors especially dreaded, having no compass, was the absence of any power of making observations of the sun and stars (see below, ver. 20). Moreover, it is highly probable from what immediately follows that the ship had received great damage, and was already in an unseaworthy condition. There was good reason for remaining in harbour, if possible.

**The fast was now already past.** This fast was the great Day of Atonement, which took place on the 10th of Tisri, about the beginning of our October. It is a popular way of describing the season, as we might say 'about Michaelmas;'



and it would be most natural language for St. Paul to use, for the sacred seasons of the Jews were much in his memory, and he probably observed them still as carefully as he could (see Acts xviii. 21, xx. 16, xxi. 24). In conversing with St. Luke on board the ship, he would speak in this manner, and therefore it would become natural language for St. Luke to use in his narrative. Thus the phrase can hardly be pressed into an argument to prove that the historian himself had been brought up as a Jew.

**Paul admonished them.** Here we see the apostle, who at first was merely a despised and obscure prisoner, assuming a great position among the people on board the ship, and speaking with confidence on subjects concerning which he might naturally have been supposed to be ignorant. Already he must have acquired considerable influence over the minds of those who had been sailing with him, and must have been viewed by them as no ordinary man. How far he spoke from prophetic enlightenment on this occasion, and how far from instinctive judgment of the risks that were in prospect, we cannot determine. There is always mystery in what relates to inspiration; and certainly St. Paul had had very large experience of the sea and its changes (see 2 Cor. xi. 25, which was written some years before the present occasion). Still the more reverential view is that he did speak under a consciousness of Divine teaching (see below, ver. 23).

**Ver. 10. Hurt and much damage, i.e.** risk of injury and great loss.

**But also of our lives.** St. Paul, with his customary good sense, uses an argument which would appeal forcibly to every one who heard him, whether concerned or not with the cargo or with the management of the ship (see below, ver. 31).

**Ver. 11. The master and the owner.** The former had to do with the steering and working of the vessel, the latter with the proprietorship of the vessel or cargo, or both. Looking at the matter as they did from different points of view, their united opinion must have been felt to be very weighty; and it is true to nature that the centurion should have yielded to their persuasion (*πεισθε*) 'more than to those things that were spoken of Paul.' It is evident from the form of *πεισθε* and *πεισμένοις*, that there was a prolonged and somewhat evenly-balanced discussion. The centurion, too, as was natural, had a great part in settling the question, though not, as we see from the next verse, an absolutely decisive part.

**Ver. 12. The harbour was not commodious to winter in.** It was in its very nature (*ὁρμήσας*) not commodious for this purpose. Many things had to be taken into account—the supply of provisions, for instance, as well as the soundings and the shelter. The exact knowledge of this roadstead which we now have through the surveys of British officers, shows that the case might have been reasonably argued on both sides.

**The more part advised to depart thence also.** The voice of the majority prevailed. This is another proof that there was a prolonged and free discussion as to the wisdom of remaining in the harbour of Fair Havens. The majority gave their opinion (*ἵνατι βουλή*) in favour of quitting it, if possible. What follows (*ἵνατι δυνάμετο*) shows that they were by no means certain that it would be possible to reach the harbour they desired.

**Phoenix** (*Φοίνικα*, from *Φοινίξ*). It is unfortunate

that in the Authorised Version this word is spelt like the word for *banian*, used elsewhere for *Phœnicia* (xi. 19). It ought to be pronounced in English differently. A parallel case is that of *Urbane* (Rom. xvi. 8), which is not the name of a woman. As to this 'harbour of Crete,' named 'Phoenix,' it might be said that we have nothing to do with it, inasmuch as St. Paul's ship never reached the place. But, in fact, the information which we now possess concerning it, furnishes very important and interesting elucidations of the truthfulness and accuracy of this narrative.

**Which looked towards the south-west and north-west.** This is the description which some of the sailors in consultation at Fair Havens gave of the harbour of Phoenix; and it is evident in a moment that they could not possibly have recommended, for the purpose of 'wintering,' a harbour which was exposed or open to winds from the north-west and south-west. We must obviously seek for some other explanation of the phrase than that which suggests itself at first sight; and we find this explanation by remembering that sailors regard everything as seen from the sea. This is just the difference between a chart and a map. The recommendation of Phoenix, as a good harbour for wintering, is precisely this, that it was *sheltered* from the two above-mentioned winds; and this is quite in harmony with the use of the Greek preposition *πρὸς*. As seen from the sea towards the land, the harbour of Phoenix did 'look' towards the south-west and north-west.

We come now, however, to consider whether there is any harbour on the south coast of Crete west of Fair Havens, which fulfils these conditions and the other conditions of the case. It is evident that some of the sailors on board the Alexandrian corn ship were convinced of the existence of such a place, and could describe it accurately. The writer of this note was positively told, some years ago, by a ship captain experienced in the trade of the Levant, who had often sailed along this coast, that there is no harbour here fulfilling these conditions; and all information concerning it was, till recently, somewhat precarious. An anchorage in an old Dutch chart is marked here; and it became known that a place of shelter here, easily concealed by the cliffs of this rocky coast from those who merely sailed along it to the westward, was familiar to Greek pirates. At length the point was entirely settled and made clear by the publication of the charts of our British surveying officers. There is no difficulty now in identifying Phoenix with Lutro, in the narrowest part of the island of Crete. It is a place of admirable shelter, with deep water close under the rocks, and precisely protected from south-west and north-west winds, as was said in the discussion at Fair Havens.

*Sudden and Violent Storm from the East-north-east*  
—*The Ship undergirded and laid to under the*  
*Lee of Claudia, 13-17.*

**Ver. 13. Supposing that they had attained their purpose.** The phrase expresses the utmost confidence. And this was natural. In two respects an encouraging change of weather took place—the wind was no longer violent; and it blew from the south. It appeared that they could very easily accomplish their intention. A vessel that could sail within seven points of the wind would have no difficulty in rounding Cape Matala, which was a few miles off, west by south. And thence to

Phoenix, within three hours' sail, the wind, if it remained the same, would be as favourable as possible. In this confidence they were coasting 'close by Crete,' and, as we find afterwards (ver. 16), with so little fear that the boat was towing behind.

Ver. 14. **But not long after.** How suddenly violent changes may take place when we least expect them, and when we have thought that already we have 'gained our purpose'! Every part of the narrative before us, and this part very particularly, admits of being turned into an admirable sermon. As to the actual facts of the case, the sailing books which contain directions for navigating these coasts tell us that it very often happens that after a gentle southerly wind a violent gale from the north-east comes on suddenly. As to the exact point where the change took place in the instance under consideration, we cannot precisely determine this; but it was evidently 'not long after' they rounded Cape Matala, when they would be closest to the shore.

**There arose against it.** The translation in the Authorised Version is incorrect. The phrase *κατ' αὐτὴν* cannot refer to the ship, the word for which, employed throughout, is *πλοῖον*. The meaning is that the storm came 'down from the island.' The land here is very high, and the gale suddenly swept down one of the gullies among the mountains, in a south-westerly direction.

**A tempestuous wind named Euroclydon.** The word translated 'tempestuous' is very strong. It was a *typhonic* wind, a hurricane. As to the precise direction in which the wind blew, and the name which is given to it, we encounter here a very interesting question. The manuscripts vary as to the reading, and are rather evenly balanced between 'Euroclydon' and 'Euro Aquilo.' There is a presumption at first sight in favour of the former word, partly because it is a very strange word, and partly because the phrase 'a wind called Euroclydon' seems to call attention to a popular name of the wind used by the sailors on this occasion. Moreover, there is this objection to the other word, that it appears to be made up half of Greek and half of Latin. The Sinaïtic MS., however, it must be admitted, has recently turned the scale in favour of Euro Aquilo. Whatever may be our conclusion in this matter, two things are clear,—first, either word shows that the gale blew more or less from the east; while, secondly, the fact that it came 'down from' the island, and drove the ship to the southward (see below), shows that it blew more or less from the north. In popular language, it was a north-easterly gale. We shall see more precisely, when we come to sum up the evidence, that the quarter from which it blew was east-north-east.

Ver. 15. **When the ship was caught.** Here, again, a very strong expression is used in the original, implying that the wind *seized hold* of the ship, as it were, and whirled her out of her course.

**Could not bear up into the wind.** The literal meaning is, 'could not look at, or against, the wind;' and the phrase is made all the more expressive by the fact that in ancient ships, eyes were painted on each side of the prow. This is part of that personification of a ship which has been common in all ages and nations, and which leads to some of the singular language used by our own boatmen and sailors. See *e.g.* below, ver. 27.

**We let her drive.** Rather it should be translated thus: 'Yielding to the wind, we were driven.' St. Paul would hardly speak as though at this moment he had any responsibility in the management of the ship. In the first instance they *scudded* before the wind; they had no choice in the matter. It is worth while to observe that two verses below, where reference is made to certain practical steps taken by the sailors, the word is not *ὑπομένειν*, but *ὑπέρκειν*.

Ver. 16. **Running under a certain island which is called Clauda.** The meaning of 'running under' is that they ran *under its lee*, as in vers. 3 and 7. Under the shelter of this island, they would have, for a short time, comparatively smooth water, which was a matter of the utmost importance to them in their preparations for riding out the storm. There is no difficulty whatever in identifying this island with the modern Gozo. Both its ancient and its modern name are well known. In position it lies nearly south-west from Cape Matala, a circumstance which helps us to determine the direction of the wind, as we shall see presently.

**We had much work to come by the boat.** The use of the first person should be observed here. It is not impossible that St. Luke and St. Paul themselves gave some aid in this matter, as they did in another emergency soon afterwards (see ver. 19). The first instinct of the sailors, at so dangerous a moment, would be to make sure of the boat. But to get it up on deck with so furious a wind blowing and in so heavy a sea, was not easy, which accounts for the strong language employed here. In order to accomplish their purpose, taking advantage of the temporary lull under the lee of Clauda, they would bring the ship's head round towards the north, and bring the boat up to the davits on the larboard side, which would be sheltered from the wind. It is important to observe this; for the vessel, as we shall see, drifted afterwards with her starboard side to the wind. Reuss strangely supposes that they put the boat out into the water ('on mit la chaloupe dehors, manœuvre très-difficile par une mer grosse et houleuse'), and he finds fault with the commentators for supposing that they took the boat on board ('comme si elle avait été traînée à la remorque tout le long du voyage; mais dans ce cas on voit pas comment la manœuvre des câbles et des poutres a pu se faire'). But the boat would not be required in the waves for undergirding the ship, nor could *ἐκπνέειν* mean that they put the boat out of the ship; and, in fact, Reuss contradicts himself, for he admits afterwards (vers. 30 and 32) that the boat was on board. There is no chance of attaining a correct idea of the details of this voyage except from the point of view of practical seamanship. But, when examined from this point of view, the whole becomes perfectly clear.

Ver. 17. **They used helps, undergirding the ship.** It is evident that the timbers were in danger of parting. Hence they artificially strengthened the vessel by passing ropes round it over the gunwale and under the keel, and tightening them on deck by levers. This process is called 'frapping' in the English navy; and before the large use of iron in modern shipbuilding, the process was by no means uncommon in cases of great peril. Several instances are given in Conybeare and Howson's *Life and Epistles of St. Paul*. In the times of the Greeks and Romans,

the probability of this method being required was such that 'helps' were sometimes carried on board in the form of ropes made ready. Compare Hor. *Od.* i. 14, 6: 'Sine funibus vix durare carinæ possint imperiosius æquor;' and see the *Excursus*.

**Fearing lest they should fall into the quick-sands.** This means a certain very definite part of the sea called the Greater Syrtis, full of shoals, on the north coast of Africa. The ancient navigators dreaded this place very much. Here Virgil placed the shipwreck of Æneas. The Syrtis lay to the south-west of the present position of the ship. Thus we have another element here for determining the direction of the wind. If they continued to run before the wind, they feared lest they should be driven into the Syrtis. Hence the wind blew from the north-east. To avoid this danger, they adopted the plan which is described in the next words.

**Strake sail.** The verb used here (*χαλάσαντες*) is the same which is employed below (ver. 30) of the lowering of the boat into the sea, and of the lowering of St. Paul, after his conversion, from the wall of Damascus (Acts ix. 25; 2 Cor. xi. 33). What they brought down upon deck was, no doubt, the heavy top-hamper (*τὸ εὐνῶς*) of the masts. The rig of ships at this date consisted of heavy square sails, each with an immense yard, and this would necessitate the presence of other heavy gear. To suppose that the sailors 'strake sail,' in this instance, in the sense of setting no sail at all, would be a great mistake. They could not have adopted a more dangerous course, for thus they would have drifted before the wind into the very Syrtis which, above all things, they dreaded. What they did was this. They *laid* the ship *to*; and, her head being already to the north, they laid her to on the starboard tack, or with her right side to the wind. This is done by setting a small amount of sail, and with the united action of the wind on this sail, and of the rudder on the water, keeping the ship's head as near the wind as possible. This is a method familiar to all sailors, when their design is not to make progress, but to ride out a storm.

**So were driven.** More accurately, 'so they drifted.' It is worth while to notice that here the word is *ῥιπνύρε*, whereas above (ver. 15) it is *ῥιπνύθε*, the reference being now more specific to the result of the action of the sailors in the working of the vessel.

When a ship is laid to, she does not remain stationary, but *drifts*; and two questions arise—first, as to the direction in which, and secondly, as to the rate at which, she drifts. As regards the rate, any experienced sailors would say that, under the circumstances now before us, the rate would be about a mile and a half an hour. The direction depends on two conditions. First, we must inquire how near the vessel would lie to the wind. Now, it may be said with confidence, that if this Alexandrian ship could sail and make progress in fair weather within seven points of the wind, she would be within about six points of the wind when laid to. Thus, the wind blowing from the east-north-east, her head would point due north. A ship, however, does not under such circumstances make progress in the direction in which her bow points. Allowance must be made for lee-way: she drifts more or less to leeward; and here, using the experience of sailors as our guide,

we may say that this lee-way would amount to about seven points. Thus the actual course of the ship was within thirteen points of the wind, or west by north.

Here, then, we have the ship under the lee of Clauda made ready as well as possible for the contingencies of the storm, with the boat taken on board, undergirded or frapped, laid to on the starboard tack, and drifting west by north at the rate of a mile and a half an hour. We must not anticipate what the result must be as to the coast which she will reach, but must proceed with the narrative. It is impossible to know how long the storm will last, or whether, in the course of it, the vessel will not founder.

*Long-continued Severity of the Gale—St. Paul's Address to the People on board, in the midst of the Storm, 18–26.*

Ver. 18. **The next day they lightened the ship.** This is said in general terms to have been done under the pressure of the storm; but there is little doubt that there was a more specific reason, that the danger which had been apprehended had occurred—in fact, that, in spite of the undergirding, the ship had sprung a leak, and that already the water was gaining in the hold. What particular things were thrown overboard on this day we cannot tell; but, of course, they would be such heavy things as could most easily be spared. Compare Jonah i. 5.

Ver. 19. **We cast out with our own hands the tackling of the ship.** This was 'on the third day.' The danger was now more imminent, as is evident from two particulars. In the first place, the passengers themselves (St. Luke certainly among the rest, and probably St. Paul and Aristarchus) took part in lightening the ship. This seems to imply fatigue and exhaustion among the seamen, unless, indeed, the weight of what they threw overboard required many hands. The second proof of the growing peril is 'that they now parted with some of the gear of the ship.' This certainly would not have been done without urgent necessity. We cannot tell precisely what part of the gear is meant. Mr. Smith thinks it was the main-yard, 'an immense spar, probably as long as the ship, and which would require the united efforts of passengers and crew to launch overboard,' adding 'that the relief which a ship would experience by this would be of the same kind as in a modern ship, when the guns are thrown overboard.' But would sailors, in danger of foundering, willingly lose sight of such a spar as this, which would be capable of supporting thirty or forty men in the water?

Ver. 20. **When neither sun nor stars in many days appeared.** This was a most serious aggravation of the danger. The great reason which made ancient navigation perilous in the winter was, that the sky is then more overcast than at other seasons. See note above (ver. 9), on the special necessity of taking observations from the sun and stars, when the compass is not available.

**All hope was now taken away.** Two stages in the progress of growing fear have been mentioned in the two preceding verses. Now we come to the third stage, which is absolute despair. We should note that it was precisely at this time, when no escape through human means seemed possible, that St. Paul interposed with Divine encouragement.



Ver. 21. **After long abstinence.** See below on ver. 33. One great aggravation of the hardship and suffering of an emergency like this is the want of proper and regular food. The fires are put out, the provisions are soaked, and meanwhile all hands are required for every effort that can be suggested for the safety of the ship. One absurd comment made on this passage is, that a religious fast was observed by the crew during the storm. Nothing could be more unreal than such a supposition; and, in commenting on this narrative, it is incumbent upon us, above all things, to present it in its reality.

**Paul stood forth in the midst of them.** He chose some place on the deck, whence he could most easily address them; and the sailors, soldiers, and passengers now willingly crowded round him, however incredulous they may have been before regarding him. We feel this to be a most striking and impressive moment, when we remember that he had been praying while they had been struggling with the storm, and that he is now calm and confident while they have lost all hope.

**Ye should have hearkened unto me.** His purpose, as Chrysostom says, is not to taunt them, but to inspire them with confidence in him for the future. They have now good reason for believing in his prophetic insight.

**To have gained this harm and loss.** This literal translation is very emphatic. Mr. Humphry reminds us that in Greek and Latin to *gain* a loss is to *avoid* it. The Vulgate has the correct equivalent, 'Lucri facere.'

Ver. 22. **No loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship.** See ver. 10. His comparatively dim prophetic insight is now become clearer.

Ver. 23. **The angel of God.** St. Luke says 'an angel,' not 'the angel.' As we read through the Acts of the Apostles, we have occasion to observe, more than once, that the ministry of angels is made conspicuous in this book. See i. 10, x. 3, xii. 7, xvi. 9.

**Whose I am, and whom I serve.** One of the noblest utterances that ever came from the lips of man, and made more remarkable by the circumstances under which the words were uttered. As addressed to the hearers, this short sentence is a whole sermon, full of meaning. As an expression of Paul's habitual state of mind, it is invaluable. His speech would have been complete without it; but he cannot help showing by this outburst of feeling what is in his heart. Similar instances of this characteristic of St. Paul's style are to be found in Rom. i. 9, and at the end of Gal. ii. 20.

Ver. 24. **Fear not, Paul.** It is a natural inference from these words that St. Paul himself had been experiencing fear. That he was not a stranger to fear, is evident from chap. xviii. 9. Nor is he ashamed to own this in his letters.

**God hath given thee all them that sail with thee.** This seems to show that he had been engaged not only in prayer, but in intercessory prayer. Compare the language in Phil. 22. The exclamation *ἰδοὺ* in the passage before us appears to denote something unexpected.

Ver. 25. **I believe.** This might truly be called a sermon on faith.

Ver. 26. **Howbeit we must be cast upon a certain island.** Prophetic prescience does not imply that everything is clear (see xx. 22, 23).

### *Anchoring in the Night, 27-29.*

Ver. 27. **When the fourteenth night was come.** The reckoning, as above in vers. 12 and 19, is from their leaving Fair Havens. About a day must be allowed, more or less, for all that was done before the ship was made ready under the lee of Claudia for the gale which had suddenly come upon them.

**As we were driven up and down in Adria.** Two points must be carefully noted here. In the first place, the word *Ἀδριατικός* does not necessarily mean that they were driven to and fro; nor is there any reason to suppose that the wind was perpetually changing its course. The sinuosities which in old Bible-maps used to be assigned to this part of St. Paul's imaginary course, were only an indication of ignorance as to the right way of solving this problem. The direction of the ship's way, though of course it varied slightly as she 'came up and fell off,' during the changing moods of the gale, did not deviate far from a straight line. The other point relates to the meaning of 'Adria.' The popular language of our own day might easily lead us to suppose that the Gulf of Venice is intended. But this would not be in accordance with the use of geographical terms in classical times. This word 'Adria' denoted the central basin of the Mediterranean between Sicily on the west and Greece on the east, and extending as far southwards as the coast of Africa. To quote two well-known geographers, Ptolemy distinguishes clearly between the Adriatic Sea and the Adriatic Gulf; and Pausanias says that the Straits of Messina separate the Tyrrhene Sea from the Adriatic Sea.

**About midnight the shipmen deemed that they drew near to some country.** The phrase here used (*περὶ μεσσηνίας εὐρέθη χώρα*) is characteristic of that animated language of sailors, according to which everything is spoken of from their own point of view, the ship being, as it were, personified. These sailors suspected that they were 'fetching' some land near to them. But now we must inquire into the reason why they suspected this. It was the middle of the night; hence the thought could not have been suggested by anything which they saw. There were no lighthouses then to warn them. Nor would the suggestion have come through any fragrance of gardens, as has been fancifully supposed, for the wind blew from the ship towards the land. The fact is, they heard the sound of breakers, which is a terrible sound to seamen, and which is often perceived by sailors, when the ears of others would not recognise it. Thus it is true to nature that St. Luke should observe that it was 'the shipmen' who became conscious of this danger. As to that part of the coast of Malta, if the conclusion to which we shall be led may be anticipated, there must have been infallibly breakers on Koura Point that night.

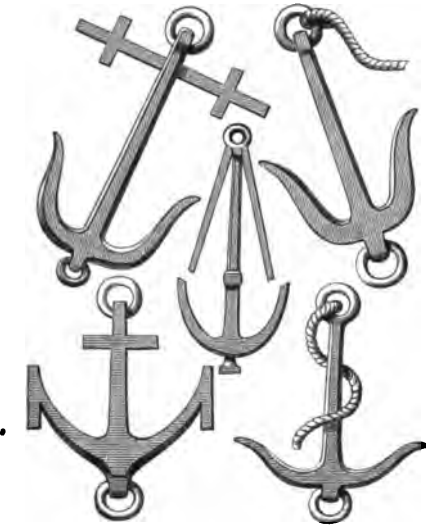
Ver. 28. **Sounded, and found it twenty fathoms.** On hearing the breakers, their instinct would be to heave the lead and ascertain the depth of the water. The fathom (*ἄβυθος*) of the Greeks is practically the same measure of length as that which we designate by that term.

**Sounded again, and found it fifteen fathoms.** There is nothing extraordinary in finding a depth of fifteen fathoms soon after a depth of twenty fathoms had been found. But we must remember

that this shallower depth was found in succession to the greater depth *in the direction in which the ship was drifting*, and that there had been time to ascertain this without the ship striking. These two conditions must be satisfied before we can identify the exact place of the shipwreck (see note on ver. 41). They were now shoaling the water, and in imminent danger of striking, and the only possible expedient for safety was to anchor. From what follows, also, it would appear that there was possibly another reason for this conviction that they were in the utmost risk.

Ver. 29. **Fearing lest we should have fallen upon rocks.** It might seem now that they not only heard breakers at a distance, but now heard them directly ahead. Such is Mr. Smith's view. This is not, however, necessarily the meaning of the words, which may express only a general fear.

**They cast four anchors out of the stern.** It is customary, for very good reasons, to anchor from the bow: '*Anchora de prora jacitur.*' But



• Ancient Anchors.

it is quite possible to anchor from the stern; and on emergency this has often been done. This was done, for instance, under the orders of Lord Nelson at the battle of Copenhagen in 1801, and of Lord Exmouth at the battle of Algiers in 1816. The difficulty in the case before us is, that these seamen were *perforced* to anchor from the stern. It is probable, however, that they had made ready for an emergency which was likely to happen. The fact that there were four anchors seems to show that they were well provided with ground tackle. Moreover, ancient ships were so built that they frequently anchored at the stern. This may be seen in the Levant now in small vessels of the old build; and Mr. Smith has produced an illustration from a sculpture at Herculaneum strictly contemporary with the Apostle Paul.

**Wished for the day.** Literally, 'prayed that the day might come on;' and some commentators have supposed that actual prayers to this effect were offered up whether by Christians or by Heathens on board. This supposition is hardly natural.

The day was sure to dawn. The anxiety, however, of all on board is expressed as strongly as possible.

At this point, without anticipating the particulars of the argument, which must be summed up afterwards, we may consider what the probabilities are as to the place where the ship was anchored. Fourteen days had passed since she left Fair Havens. Allowance must be made for about a day before she was laid to on the starboard tack, under the lee of Clauda. The direction of her drift was west by north, and the rate about a mile and a half an hour, or thirty-six miles in the twenty-four hours. Now Malta lies west by north from Clauda, and the distance is 480 miles. The coincidence is so remarkable as to be startling; and yet there is nothing forced in this way of viewing the matter. Admiral Penrose and Mr. Smith, at different times, and quite independently, took this problem in hand with the view of solving it on the principles of practical seamanship, with just that slight difference in their results which gives great additional force to the argument. It seems impossible to believe that St. Paul at this moment could have been anywhere else except on the coast of Malta.

*Attempt of the Sailors to leave the Ship baffled by the Apostle, 30-32.*

Ver. 30. **When they had let down the boat into the sea.** This was the boat which had cost so much trouble before (see ver. 16). They had already lowered it down from the davits, when St. Paul perceived their purpose, and with great presence of mind frustrated it in the most sagacious way.

**Under colour as though they would have cast anchor out of the foreship.** No more plausible excuse could be given to the passengers. It was impossible to know whether the four anchors at the stern would hold; and the ship would be made more steady by putting out additional anchors at the bow. See note on ver. 41.

Ver. 31. **The centurion and the soldiers.** St. Paul said nothing to the sailors, but spoke at once to his friend the centurion; and he used with him and the soldiers the argument which is of greatest weight in such a case, the appeal to self-preservation.

**Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved.** Much has been written on this in connection with the assurance previously given that they should all certainly be saved. It is quite useless to write any more on the subject. The same difficulty meets us everywhere.

Ver. 32. **Cut the ropes.** With military promptitude and without any argument, the soldiers settled the question. The ropes were cut; and the boat drifted off into the darkness, and was dashed to pieces on the rocks. A very good religious moral, full of very varied instruction, might be connected with the story of this boat.

*Waiting for the Day—St. Paul's Exhortation—A hearty Meal taken by all on board—On his Advice, Cargo thrown overboard, 33-38.*

Ver. 33. **Paul besought them all.** A better translation would be that he 'exhorted' them all. Once more we see the apostle in the position of supreme command, as the only person on board in whom confidence was placed. Whatever he did now might be expected to have a distinctly

religious effect upon the minds of the crew and the passengers.

**To take some meat.** This was characteristic not only of his good sense and presence of mind, but of his sympathetic nature. See, for instance, Acts xiv. 17; 1 Tim. v. 23; 2 Tim. iv. 20. The word 'meat' is used in the general sense of 'food.'

**This is the fourteenth day.** See note above on ver. 27.

**Having taken nothing.** He uses words naturally, in their popular sense. Those whom he addressed knew what he meant. A fortnight had passed without any regular meal (see note on ver. 21). Even from the very mention of this subject, it is evident that there was much suffering from hunger and weakness. Some hours at least, apparently even a longer time, had passed since that incident; and now they must have been utterly exhausted from the want of proper food.

**Ver. 34. This is for your health.** The correct meaning is: 'This is essential for your safety.' Their imminent danger was not death from starvation, but from drowning in the waves. They had laborious and difficult work before them; and it was necessary that they should recruit their strength.

**There shall not a hair fall from the head of any of you.** This was a proverb denoting entire safety and exemption from the slightest harm. See 1 Kings i. 52; Matt. x. 30; Luke xxi. 18.

**Ver. 35. He took bread, and gave thanks to God in the presence of them all.** It is difficult to believe that there was not at this moment in his mind a reminiscence of the Sacred Eucharist, especially when we observe that the 'breaking' of the bread is specified. See Luke xxiv. 30, 35.

**He began to eat.** He set the example. We see from what follows that this is by no means unimportant.

**Ver. 36. Then were they all of good cheer, and they also took some meat.** In one sense the meal may truly be said to have been eucharistic. This is one of those passages in the Acts of the Apostles which tend, though it records many depressing and discouraging circumstances, to give a cheerful character to the book. See, for instance, i. 12 (with Luke xxiv. 52), xvi. 25, xxviii. 15. On the occasion before our notice, it is evident that the people on board were utterly exhausted, and had lost all heart, so that even the desire for food was gone.

**Ver. 37. Two hundred threescore and sixteen souls.** Having mentioned the fact that all on board took some food, he is led to state the total number. For the size of ancient merchant ships, see the Excursus. We must call to mind that these people were afterwards (xxviii. 11) conveyed from Malta to Puteoli in the *Castor* and *Pollux*, in addition to her own crew and passengers.

**Ver. 38. They lightened the ship.** This would require great and active labour; and the food they had taken was an essential condition of their doing it effectually. The cargo was now of no use, as it was known that the ship would be lost; and there were two reasons why it was important to throw it overboard—the ship was to be run aground, and it was desirable to make it draw as little water as possible. But, moreover, the ship having been for many days on the starboard tack, it is probable that the cargo had shifted, and that the vessel was heeling over to the port side. In cargoes of grain, unless the grain is packed in

sacks, such displacement is very liable to take place. This very subject has been brought under public attention lately in the English newspapers.

**Cast out the wheat into the sea.** In the late Professor Blunt's *Undesigned Coincidences* (p. 326) are some remarks on this subject, which present so good an example of this kind of argument that it is worth while to quote them at length: 'In the fifth verse we are informed that the vessel into which the centurion removed Paul and the other prisoners at Myra belonged to *Alexandria*, and was *sailing into Italy*. From the tenth verse we learn that it was a merchant vessel, for mention is made of its *lading*, but the nature of the lading is not *directly* stated. In this verse, at a distance of some thirty verses from the last, we find, by the merest chance, of what its cargo consisted. The freight was naturally enough kept till it could be kept no longer, and then we discover for the first time that it was *wheat*, the very article which such vessels were accustomed to carry from Egypt to Italy. These notices, so detached from each other, tell a continuous story, but it is not perceived till they are brought together. The circumstances drop out one by one in the course of the narrative, unarranged, unpremeditated, thoroughly accidental; so that the chapter might be read twenty times, and their agreement with one another and with contemporary history be still overlooked.'

*Preparations for running the Ship aground—Cruel Scheme of the Soldiers foiled—Ultimate Escape of all to Land, 39-44.*

**Ver. 39. When it was day, they knew not the land.** At first sight this may cause surprise; for Melita was a well-known island, a distinct part of a Roman province, having an admirable harbour, familiar to Alexandrian sailors. But these sailors were not at this moment in the harbour of Valetta, but on a part of the coast which they had never seen before. An English seaman might have made many voyages between New York and Liverpool, and yet might be puzzled (even with the help of such charts as the old Greek sailors did *not* possess) if he found himself, in foggy weather, off a part of the coast of North Wales which he had never seen before.

**A certain creek with a shore.** In one sense every creek has a shore; but the Greek word here (*αιγιαλίς*) denotes a pebbly or sandy beach, as opposed to rocks.

**Minded, if it were possible, to thrust in the ship.** They were not quite sure that they would be able to accomplish their purpose. How the matter was managed is described in the following verses.

**Ver. 40. When they had taken up the anchors.** This was the first essential step. These anchors were, as we have seen (ver. 29), 'cast out of the stern.' When this was done, the ship was free for the full action of the wind, which was blowing towards the shore. The translation, however, is not quite accurate. They did not 'take up' the anchors, but cut the ropes which connected the ship with them. This is the meaning of *αἰχμαλόντες*; and it is evident from what follows, which, correctly rendered, is, 'They committed them (*i.e.* the anchors) to the sea, these anchors were of no further use, for it was known that the ship would be destroyed.'

**And loosed the rudder bands.** This phrase,

for more reasons than one, demands careful attention. In the first place, the little word *ἄμα* is not noticed in the Authorised Version. What was done here was done simultaneously with the cutting away of the anchors. In the next place, the cutting away of the anchors was quite necessary for what was being done here. The true translation is 'the bands of the rudders,' the word 'rudders' being in the plural. See the Excursus at the end of this chapter. The rudders were now absolutely necessary in order to steer the ship precisely, so that she might take the ground at the right point. Moreover, the ropes which connected the ship with the anchors might possibly have been an impediment to the free action of the paddle-rudders. The anchors themselves could now be of no further use, the destruction of the ship being inevitable.

**Raised up the mainsail to the wind.** The sail which would have been the most useful for the purpose in hand would have been the foresail; and it is probable that this sail is meant. The Greek word (*ἀρίστη*) which is employed here by St. Luke, is found in no other Greek author; but it is a familiar word in the more modern seafaring language of the Mediterranean. The Venetians gave this name to the largest sail, and this may have led to the use of the term 'mainsail' here; but in Venetian ships the foresail was the largest sail. See the Excursus. Dr. Humphry very appositely here refers to the familiar passage in *Juvenal* (xii. 68):

'Et quod superaverat unum,  
Velo prora suo'—

quoting the note of the Scholiast, 'Id est artem solo velificaverunt.'

**Toward shore.** Toward that particular beach (*πρὸς αἰγιαλόν*) which had been observed.

**Ver. 41. Falling into a place where two seas met.** Assuming that the place of anchoring in the night was that which has been determined above, we have here one of the most remarkable helps for the identification of the exact place of St. Paul's shipwreck. The word *διόλκοντος* denotes that which is intermediate between two broad surfaces of sea. This connecting link may be either land or water. The Greek word is equivalent to the Latin *bimaris* applied by Horace to Corinth, which is situated on an isthmus between two seas. But Strabo applies the term *διόλκοντος* to the Bosphorus, which is a strait between two seas. And such is its meaning here. As the ship parted from her anchors, when steered towards the shore, and impelled by the north-east wind rapidly moved towards the beach, those on board would observe on their right the small island of Salmonetta disengaging itself from the general coast, and showing a channel between itself and that coast. This was unexpected; and it impressed itself vividly on St. Luke's mind, and he here records a fact vividly remembered.

**They ran the ship aground.** The Greek word here is one of those many technical naval terms which are used in this narrative with strict accuracy. In the Appendix to the article 'Ship' in the American edition of the *Dictionary of the Bible*, is a very important catalogue of details of this kind.

**The fore part stuck fast . . . but the hinder part was broken.** Mr. Smith of Jordanhill, who was distinguished among scientific men for his successful study of the geology of coasts, enters

very fully and carefully into the conditions of this part of the narrative, and shows that they are accurately met by the facts of the case. For this inquiry it must suffice to refer to his work on the *Voyage and Shipwreck of St. Paul*. Attention must be given also to what he says concerning the soundings of St. Paul's Bay, which exactly correspond with what we read above (ver. 28). As to the holding ground (ver. 30), our *Sailing Directions* say of St. Paul's Bay, that 'while the cables hold there is no danger, as the anchors will never start.'

**Ver. 42. The soldiers' counsel was to kill the prisoners.** We have here an illustration of the extreme cruelty of the Roman military system. But we have also, in however cruel a form, an indication of a high sense of honour and duty. Now that the ship had 'stuck fast,' and they were close to the shore, the fear of the soldiers was that some of the prisoners might 'swim out and escape.' They might have very little hope that they themselves would be saved; but if they themselves were drowned, while their prisoners escaped, their military reputation would be tarnished. In two passages of this Book of the Acts (xii. 19 and xvi. 27) we have exemplifications of the terrible responsibility of soldiers in charge of prisoners. Each prisoner may originally have been chained to a soldier; but under the circumstances of the moment, and indeed during the voyage, such fastenings would have been loosened.

**Ver. 43. The centurion, willing to save Paul, kept them from their purpose.** This is singularly true to the spirit of the whole course of the narrative. We have here a new indication of the charm and power which St. Paul exercised over the minds of those with whom he came in contact. It seems that Julius was very willing that the other prisoners should have been killed, but he wished to secure the safety of Paul (*διασώσαι τὸν Παῦλον*). Thus the other prisoners owed their lives to the apostle. It is possible, indeed, that the centurion was more sanguine than the soldiers were of the probability of their lives being saved; but this would be only another proof of the influence gained over him by the apostle.

**Commanded.** This military order may have been of great importance at this moment of hesitation, when many may have feared to go through the breakers, and try to 'get to land.'

**Ver. 44. Some on boards, and some on broken pieces of the ship.** There is nothing in the original to correspond with the word 'broken.' But no doubt the meaning is correctly given. The contrast is between loose planks, seats, barrels, and the like, on the one hand; and on the other hand, fragments of the ship itself, which the waves were now breaking up.

**They escaped all safe to land.** The same strong Greek word is used here as in xxvii. 43 and xxviii. 1. As to St. Paul's part in this experience of imminent danger of drowning, we must remember that he had passed through it at least three times before (see 2 Cor. xi. 25).

#### EXCURSUS.

##### ON THE SHIPS AND NAVIGATION OF THE ANCIENTS.

The narrative contained in this chapter, even if we put on one side its sacred character as part of an inspired volume, is full of manifold interest.

No other single document of antiquity gives us so much information regarding the ships and navigation of the ancients. Moreover, certain obscurities in the narrative have now been entirely cleared away by the simple expedient of applying the experience of practical seamanship as the test for solving the problems which it contains; and the result is, that now this chapter is so well understood, and felt to be so literally true, that in itself it is one of the strongest evidences of the trustworthiness of the Book of the Acts.

It will be convenient to put together here, in a small space, a few of the most important particulars of the build and capabilities of ancient ships. And, in the first place, it is essential to remove a popular impression that the merchant ships of the Mediterranean under the Roman Empire were of small size. From the history before us (ver. 31), we see that there were 276 persons on board the ship in which St. Paul was wrecked; and it is important to add that, after shipwreck, these persons were conveyed (xxviii. 11) from Malta to Italy in the *Caster* and *Pollux*, in addition to her own crew and passengers. Now, it is customary for transport ships, which are prepared for carrying soldiers, to allow a ton and a half per man. This at once gives us a test for estimating the size of Alexandrian corn ships. And the conclusion which we reach in this way is confirmed by other evidence. Thus Josephus informs us that there were six hundred persons on board the ship from which he, with about eighty others, escaped; and the great ship of Ptolemy Philadelphus, which forms the subject of one of Lucian's Dialogues, and which is described as driven by stress of weather into the Piræus, is estimated from the dimensions given to have been of 1000 or 1100 tons burden; and though this vessel was probably built for ostentation, we see that the tonnage of these trading ships was not far below that of our old East Indiamen.

There is no doubt that the ships of the Greeks and Romans were more clumsy in their build and rig than ours. But it would be a great mistake to suppose that with a favourable wind they sailed slowly. Their rig consisted of one, or more than one, large square sail; and nothing is more favourable than this for a run before the wind. In the China seas, during the monsoons, junks (which are rigged in this way) have been seen from the deck of a British sailing vessel behind in the horizon in the morning, and before in the horizon in the evening. Several specimens of rapid voyages could be given from classical antiquity. One of

the most animated is that furnished by Cato, when he held up a fresh fig in the Senate, to impress on his countrymen the imminent nearness of their enemy, and said, 'This fruit was gathered fresh at Carthage three days ago.' It would be quite safe to say that an ancient merchantman could sail seven knots an hour with a fair wind; and this conclusion is well illustrated by what we read in Acts xvi., xx., and xxviii.

A point of greater importance in reference to the voyage immediately before our attention is the question of the capability of an ancient ship of sailing near the wind. That a ship can make good progress when the direction of her course forms less than a right angle with the direction of the wind, was well known in the earliest times. The smallness of this angle depends on the character of the ship and the violence of the wind. A modern sailing ship under average circumstances can sail within six points of the wind; and it would be safe to say that an ancient one could be made to sail within seven points. Thus, to take the usual divisions of the compass, with the wind blowing from the north-north-east in moderate weather, she could make good a course north-west by north.

Certain peculiarities, in which ancient ships differed from modern, must of course be borne in mind in considering this subject. Thus, partly from defective construction, and partly from the nature of the rig, which caused violent action in a gale at the base of the mast, they were peculiarly liable to spring leaks and to founder. Hence the frequent habit of undergirding or frapping; and special provision was taken on board for this purpose, as we know from the inventory of the Attic fleet in its flourishing period, which is inscribed on certain marbles dug up at the Piræus about forty-five years ago (see ver. 17). But especially we must notice two other peculiarities and disadvantages of ancient vessels. The hinged rudder at the stern, with which we are familiar, was not known to the Greeks and Romans. In fact, the earliest proof of the use of it is to be found on the coins of our King Edward III. Even the Northmen in their voyages during the Middle Ages, like the Greeks and Romans, steered with paddle rudders, one on each quarter (see ver. 40). Finally, we must recollect that the Greeks and Romans, like the Northmen, were ignorant of the use of the compass. Hence they were peculiarly dependent on observation of the sun and stars, and were conscious of danger when the sky was overcast for a long period (see ver. 20).





CHAPTER XXVIII.

*St. Paul's Stay of Three Months in Melita—Miracles wrought there by the Apostle—Voyage to Puteoli—Arrival in Rome—Interviews with the Jews—Residence of Two Years in Rome.*

- 1 **A**ND when they<sup>1</sup> were escaped, <sup>a</sup> then they<sup>1</sup> knew that <sup>b</sup> the  
2 island was called Melita. And <sup>c</sup> the barbarous<sup>2</sup> people  
showed us <sup>d</sup> no little <sup>e</sup> kindness: for they kindled a fire, and  
received us every one, because of the present rain, and because  
3 of the cold. And when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks,  
and laid *them* on the fire, there came a viper out of<sup>3</sup> the heat,  
4 and fastened on his hand. And when <sup>c</sup> the barbarians saw the  
venomous<sup>4</sup> beast hang on his hand, they said among themselves,  
<sup>f</sup> No doubt this man is a murderer, whom, though he hath  
5 escaped the sea, <sup>g</sup> yet Vengeance<sup>5</sup> suffereth not to live. And  
6 he shook off the beast into the fire, and <sup>h</sup> felt<sup>6</sup> no harm. How-  
beit they looked when he should have swollen, or fallen down  
dead suddenly: but after they had looked a great while, and  
saw <sup>i</sup> no harm come to him, they changed *their minds*, and  
7 <sup>h</sup> said that he was a god. In the same quarters<sup>7</sup> were posses-  
sions of <sup>j</sup> the chief *man* of the island, whose name was Publius;  
8 who received us, and lodged *us* three days courteously. And  
it came to pass, that the father of Publius lay sick of a fever  
and of a bloody flux:<sup>8</sup> to whom Paul entered in, and <sup>k</sup> prayed,  
9 and <sup>l</sup> laid *his* hands on him, and healed him. So when this  
was done, others also, which had diseases in the island, came,  
10 and were healed: Who also honoured us with many <sup>m</sup> honours;  
and when we departed,<sup>9</sup> they laded *us* with such *things* as were  
necessary.
- 11 And after three months we departed<sup>10</sup> in <sup>n</sup> a ship of Alex-  
andria, which had wintered in the isle, *whose* sign *was* Castor  
12 and Pollux.<sup>11</sup> And landing at Syracuse, we tarried *there* three  
13 days. And from thence we fetched a compass,<sup>12</sup> and came to  
Rhegium: and after one day the south wind blew, and we  
14 came the next day<sup>13</sup> to Puteoli: Where we found <sup>o</sup> brethren,  
and were desired to tarry with them seven days: and so we

<sup>a</sup> Cp. ch. xxvii.  
<sup>b</sup> Ch. xxvii. 26.  
<sup>c</sup> Ver. 4;  
Rom. i. 14;  
1 Cor. xiv. 21;  
Col. iii. 11 in  
the Gk.  
<sup>d</sup> Ch. xix. 11  
(Gk.).  
<sup>e</sup> See ch.  
xxvii. 3.

<sup>f</sup> Cp. Lu. xiii.  
2.  
<sup>g</sup> Cp. Amos v.  
19, ix. 3.  
<sup>h</sup> Mk. xvi. 18;  
Lu. x. 19.

<sup>i</sup> See Lu. xxiii.  
41.  
<sup>j</sup> So ch. viii.  
20, xiv. 21.  
<sup>k</sup> Ver. 17. See  
Mk. vi. 21.

<sup>m</sup> Cp. Jas. v.  
14, 15.  
<sup>n</sup> Mk. xvi. 18.  
So ch. xix.  
21, 22;  
1 Cor. xii. 9,  
28. See  
Lu. xiii. 13.  
<sup>o</sup> 1 Tim. v. 17.  
So Mat. xv. 6.

<sup>p</sup> Ch. xxvii. 6.

<sup>q</sup> See Jo. xxi.  
23.

<sup>1</sup> According to the older authorities, we should read here, 'And having escaped, then we learned,' etc.

<sup>2</sup> render, 'and the barbarians,' or 'foreigners.'

<sup>3</sup> The older authorities read, 'on account of the heat.'

<sup>4</sup> omit 'venomous.'

<sup>5</sup> render, 'justice suffereth not,' etc.

<sup>6</sup> better, 'and suffered no harm.'

<sup>7</sup> better rendered, 'And in the neighbourhood of that place.'

<sup>8</sup> better, 'dysentery.'

<sup>9</sup> better, 'and when we set sail.'

<sup>10</sup> better, 'we set sail.'

<sup>11</sup> more accurately, 'the Dioscuri,' or 'the twin brothers.'

<sup>12</sup> better, 'having gone round, we came,' etc. <sup>13</sup> literally, 'on the second day.'



- 15 went toward <sup>14</sup> Rome. And from thence, when <sup>9</sup> the brethren heard of us, they came to meet us as far as Appii Forum, and The Three Taverns: <sup>15</sup> whom when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took courage. And when we came to Rome, the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard: <sup>16</sup> but <sup>17</sup> Paul was suffered to dwell by himself with a <sup>18</sup> soldier that kept him. \* Ch. xxiv. 23.  
Cp. ch. xxvii. 3
- 17 And it came to pass, that <sup>1</sup> after three days Paul <sup>19</sup> called <sup>2</sup> the chief of the Jews together: and when they were come together, he said unto them, Men *and* <sup>30</sup> brethren, <sup>3</sup> though I have committed nothing against the people, or <sup>4</sup> customs of our fathers, *yet* <sup>5</sup> was I delivered prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans: Who, when they had <sup>6</sup> examined me, <sup>7</sup> would have let *me* go, <sup>8</sup> because there was no cause of death in me. But when the Jews spake against *it*, I was constrained to <sup>9</sup> appeal unto Cæsar; not that I had ought to accuse my nation of. For this cause therefore have I called for you, to see *you*, and to speak with *you*: because that <sup>10</sup> for the hope <sup>11</sup> of Israel I am bound with <sup>12</sup> this chain. And they said unto him, We neither received letters out of Judæa concerning thee, neither any of the brethren that came showed or spake any harm of thee. But we desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest: for as concerning this <sup>13</sup> sect, we know that everywhere <sup>14</sup> it is spoken against. And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into *his* <sup>15</sup> lodging; to whom he <sup>16</sup> expounded and <sup>17</sup> testified <sup>18</sup> the kingdom of God, <sup>19</sup> persuading them concerning Jesus, <sup>20</sup> both out of the law of Moses, and *out of* the prophets, from morning till evening. And <sup>21</sup> some believed the *things* which were spoken, and some believed not. And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake <sup>22</sup> the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our <sup>23</sup> fathers, Saying, <sup>24</sup> Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and *their* ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with *their* eyes, and hear with *their* ears, and understand with *their* heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. Be it known therefore unto you, that <sup>25</sup> the salvation of God is sent <sup>26</sup> unto the Gentiles, and

<sup>14</sup> more accurately, 'we came to Rome.'

<sup>15</sup> Render here, 'and Tres Tabernæ,' or 'Three Taverns.'

<sup>16</sup> The majority of the older authorities omit the words, 'the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard.'

<sup>17</sup> The older authorities omit 'but.'

<sup>18</sup> better, 'with the soldier.'

<sup>19</sup> The older authorities omit 'Paul;,' render, 'that he called.'

<sup>20</sup> omit 'Men and.'

<sup>21</sup> The older authorities read, 'unto your fathers.'

29 that they will hear it. And when he had said these words, the

Jews departed, and had great <sup>9</sup> reasoning among themselves.<sup>23</sup> <sup>9</sup> Ch. xv. 2, 7 (Gk.).

30 And Paul<sup>24</sup> dwelt two whole years in his own hired house,

31 and <sup>r</sup> received all that came in unto him, <sup>s</sup> Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord <sup>r</sup> See La. viii. 40. <sup>s</sup> Ch. xx. 25.

Jesus Christ, with all <sup>t</sup> confidence, no man forbidding him. <sup>t</sup> See ch. iv. 29.

<sup>23</sup> The older authorities omit the words, 'And when he had said these words, the Jews departed, and had great reasoning among themselves.'

<sup>24</sup> The older authorities omit 'Paul;' render, 'and he dwelt,' etc.

*St. Paul's Stay of Three Months in Melita—  
Miracles wrought there by the Apostle, 1-10.*

Ver. 1. When they were escaped. The original verb here and in ver. 4 is the same that is translated 'save' in xxvii. 43, and 'escaped all safe' in xxvii. 44. See note on the former of these passages.

Then they know. Probably the true reading is 'then we knew.' St. Luke took an active part, or at least a keen interest, in the inquiry. See note on xxvii. 39.

That the island was called Melita. More correctly, 'is called Melita.' The information would be obtained immediately on landing. The island was very well known to traders in the Levant, and it was doubtless quite familiar to the sailors, and especially the captain, in this case, though they were perplexed when they found themselves on a part of its coast which was not familiar to them.

This is the right place for a slight notice (a very slight notice is all that is requisite) of the theory that the island now under our attention was Meleda in the Adriatic. There was in the seventeenth century an animated literary warfare on this subject, which seems to have given new life to certain apocryphal Acts of St. Paul, mentioned in an Excursus at the close of this chapter. It is a curious extinct controversy, but it is now extinct for ever. That the honour of St. Paul's shipwreck should be claimed for the Dalmatian Meleda was natural. At a much earlier period, however, the same claim was put forward by one of the Byzantine Emperors; and in this case, too, it is not unlikely that local ecclesiastical feeling suggested the belief. It is more strange that some modern English writers should have fallen into this old delusion.

We have seen above (vers. 29, 41) that irresistible arguments converge to the conclusion that it was on the island of Malta that St. Paul was wrecked. But the following decisive considerations should be added:—(a) When St. Paul left this island, he sailed by Syracuse and Rhegium to Puteoli (vers. 12, 13). These are precisely the natural stages for a voyage from Malta, but altogether alien from any reasonable relation with the other island. (b) Rome was the destination of Julius and his prisoners, and from the Dalmatian Meleda the natural course would have been to have gone not by the road leading through Appii Forum and the Three Taverns (ver. 15), but by a totally different road. (c) We find that a corn ship from Alexandria, bound for Puteoli, had wintered in the island on which St. Paul was wrecked (ver. 11). The harbour of Malta is a place where we should naturally have expected to find a ship under such circum-

stances; but at the Dalmatian Meleda she would have been altogether out of her course. (d) Under these circumstances of weather described above, St. Paul's ship could not have reached this Dalmatian island without a miracle. This point is so well put in the MS. notes of Admiral Penrose, that it is useful to quote what he says on the subject:—'If Euroclydon blew in such a direction as to make the pilots afraid of being driven on the quicksands (and there were no such dangers but to the south-west of them), how could it be supposed that they could be driven north towards the Adriatic? . . . We are now told that the Euroclydon ceased to blow. . . . To have drifted up the Adriatic to the island of Meleda in the requisite curve, and to have passed so many islands and other dangers in the route, would, humanly speaking, have been impossible. The distance from Claudia to this Meleda is not less than 720 geographical miles, and the wind must have been long from the south to make this voyage in fourteen days.' See *Life and Epistles of St. Paul*, chap. xxiii. As to the arguments based upon the mention of 'Adria,' see above on xxvii. 27. Other arguments, equally fallacious, based upon what we find in the second and third verses of this chapter, will be noticed in their proper places.

Ver. 2. The barbarous people showed us no little kindness. 'No common kindness' would be a more correct translation. The Greek word, too, for 'kindness' (*φιλανθρωπία*) is worthy of remark. It denotes the kindness that is shown on the general ground of humanity, irrespective of differences of rank or race. It is the word used above (xxvii. 3; see note there) of the treatment received from Julius at Sidon. The example of Heathens in such matters has often been a rebuke to Christians. In Tit. iii. 4 it may be said with reverence that the same use of the word is found.

As to the word 'barbarous' here and 'barbarian' in ver. 4, it is clear that these people did not act as savages. Their generous and sympathetic conduct is strangely contrasted with the cruelty and plunder that have often disgraced wreckers on our own coast. But, indeed, the word has no such meaning. It denoted simply those who did not speak Greek or Latin (see Rom. i. 14; 1 Cor. xiv. 11; Col. iii. 11). The modern Maltese speak the Arabic, which was introduced at the Mohammedan conquest, with a slight admixture of Italian and English. This condition of things is in some degree parallel to that which existed under the Roman Empire. The Maltese then spoke Phœnician, with a slight admixture of Greek and Latin. Diodorus Siculus (ver. 12) tells us that this island was originally colonised by the Phœnicians.

They kindled a fire. Here we touch one of

the fantastic objections which have been brought forward against the identification of this Melita with the modern Malta. It is said, and quite truly, that there is now a great absence of wood in the island. It might indeed be replied that a fire could have been made of driftwood from wrecks. The 'bundle of sticks,' however, in the next verse points to the presence of brushwood. The true answer to the objection is that it is only in very modern times that the population of Malta has grown so enormously as to lead to the destruction of the natural wood of the island. Persons were recently living who remembered the growth of natural wood near St. Paul's Bay.

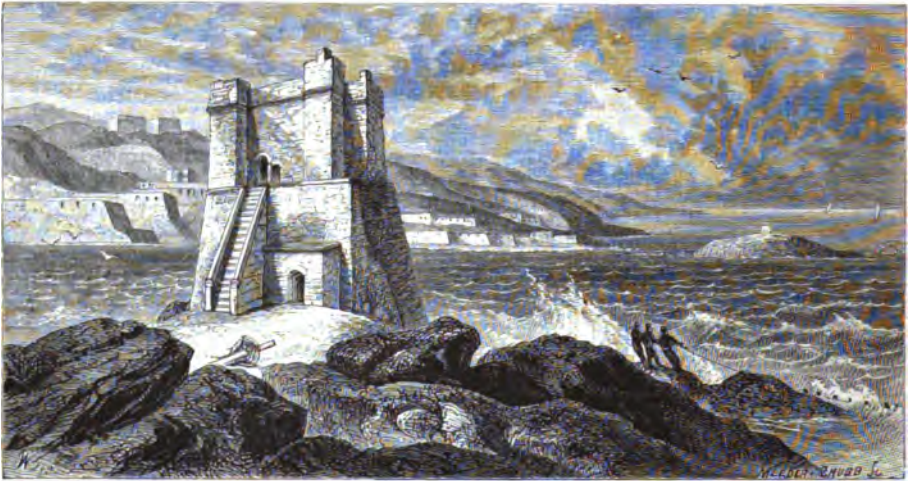
**Received us every one.** The natives of the island welcomed these cold and shipwrecked people to their company and to the warmth of the fire. The phrase 'every one' expresses a hearty gratitude in St. Luke's remembrance of the scene.

**Because of the present rain, and because of the cold.** These particulars could hardly have been introduced so naturally, except by one who had been present on the occasion. Whatever the

weather had been before, as to dryness or wet, rain was at this moment adding to their distress. The Greek verb is used here in its exact sense, as in Gal. i. 4; 2 Thess. ii. 2. The 'cold' of a north-easterly wind at this season must have been extreme; but even if the wind had changed with the coming on of the rain, we must remember that these shipwrecked people had passed through the waves in escaping to the land.

**Ver. 3. When Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks.** More exactly, 'had twisted together a large quantity of sticks.' We see the apostle here helping with his own hands to improve the fire, as we saw him before (xxvii. 19) in the storm helping with his own hands to lighten the ship by throwing 'tackling' overboard. Another remark, too, may be permitted here. We see St. Paul 'warming himself at a fire,' just as St. Peter did on a very different occasion (see John xviii. 13-25). Such incidents are part of that natural framework which gives life and reality to the biographies of the New Testament.

**There came a viper out of the heat.** Here we



St. Paul's Bay.

encounter another objection, similar to the preceding, against the identification of Malta. It was put forward in a very random way by Coleridge in a conversation quoted in his *Table Talk*. But this objection falls with the other. It is true that there are no poisonous serpents now in Malta; but with the increase of population, wood has been cleared away, and with the clearing away of wood noxious reptiles have disappeared. Mr. Smith adduces a similar experience of recent date, in the island of Arran, and quotes from Sir C. Lyell's *Principles of Geology* the following sentence, written by travellers in Brazil, concerning the poisonous serpents and other dangerous animals of that country: 'With the increasing population and cultivation of the country, these evils will gradually diminish: when the inhabitants have cut down the woods, drained the marshes, made roads in all directions, and founded villages and towns, man will, by degrees, triumph over the rank vegetation and the noxious animals.' By the expression, 'came out of the heat,' is meant that the animal came through the bundle of sticks in consequence of being

awakened into activity from a torpid state by the heat. Dr. Hackett quotes Professor Agassiz as saying that such reptiles become torpid as soon as the temperature falls sensibly below the mean temperature of the place which they inhabit; also that they lurk in rocky places, and that they are accustomed to dart at their enemies sometimes several feet at a bound.

**Fastened on his hand.** The impression given by these words is, that St. Paul was bitten by the viper; and this, no doubt, is the true impression. We gain nothing in such a case by attenuating a miracle.

**Ver. 4. When the barbarians saw the venomous beast hang on his hand.** Our translators have added the adjective 'venomous.' The word *θήριον* is exactly that which would be naturally used for a snake. There is a curious illustration of this in the word 'treacle,' which is derived from *θηρακία*, a black medicine or antidote made of snakes. For the meaning of the word 'barbarian,' see note above.

**They said among themselves.** This suspicious

conversation among themselves is an animated element in the description. We can well imagine the scene.

**This man is a murderer.** They would readily perceive that St. Paul was one of the prisoners under the charge of the military officer, and it was natural to suspect that his crime had been no light one. It is not likely that he had been chained to a soldier, when the people from the ship were struggling through the waves; but the manacle might be on his wrist, and he might be chained again to a soldier on gaining the land.

**Yet vengeance suffereth not to live.** The ancients personified retributive justice under the name of Nemesis. We need not imagine an absolute personification in this case. The instinctive moral sense of these untutored people would naturally lead them to this conclusion. Mr. Humphry adduces here an interesting Greek epigram, the substance of which is this, that a man shipwrecked on the coast of Libya, and killed while asleep by a serpent, had struggled in vain against the waves, finding here on land the fate that was his due.

**Ver. 5. Felt no harm.** We see here part of the fulfilment of the promise in Mark xvi. 12, words which were doubtless fulfilled in other instances likewise.

**Ver. 6. Swollen, or fallen down dead suddenly.** Either of these results might have followed from the bite of a poisonous serpent. It should be noted, however, that the former word denotes inflammation rather than swelling.

**After they had looked a great while.** Again we should remark the singular reality and naturalness of the description.

**They changed their minds, and said that he was a god.** Such a sudden revulsion of feeling is characteristic of rude and unlettered people. There had been, in St. Paul's experience, a similar instance among the Lycaonians, though in an opposite direction (xiv. 18, 19).

**Ver. 7. In the same quarters.** The traditional place is Città Vecchia, where is the country residence of the present British governor of the island.

**The chief man of the island, whose name was Publius.** The name is Latin, and doubtless he was a Roman or an Italian. The title given to him (τῷ πρώτῳ τῆς νήσου) is peculiar, and it corresponds precisely with the title (πρώτος Μελιταινῶν and *Primus Melitensium*) which has been found on ancient Maltese inscriptions, as was noted long ago by Biscoe, who quotes Bochart and Grotius (*The History of the Acts confirmed by other Authors*, p. 62). A question still remains as to the precise meaning of this title, though this does not affect the value of the historical coincidence. The meaning can hardly be that Publius was the wealthiest man on the island, for his father was still living. Clearly there is something official in the phrase. The natural view is that Publius was the Roman governor of the island; and this has been the common opinion. At this time Melita was a political dependency of Sicily, and the prætor of this larger island would have a *legatus* in the smaller. Hackett, however, in his second edition (p. 449), quotes an interesting note by President Woolsey of Yale College, in which it is shown from inscriptions that those who had ceased to be chief magistrates of the island might still retain the title of *πρώτος*; and similar honorary titles are found in ancient inscriptions belonging

to towns in Italy. Hackett justly remarks that, if this is the correct view, it really enhances the narrator's accuracy, 'inasmuch as the range of the application of the term is narrower.'

**Lodged us three days courteously.** This, no doubt, refers to the centurion and his prisoners. It was natural that Publius should pay especial attention to Julius and his party; and we may be sure that the favourable feeling of the latter towards St. Paul would not be without its influence on the mind of the former. It is to be observed that the Greek word here translated 'courteously' is not the same that is so rendered in xxvii. 3. This is not in itself a matter of much moment, but it would be an advantage to the English reader to be enabled to follow the use of such words precisely.

**Ver. 8. Lay sick of a fever and of a bloody flux.** He was suffering, in fact, from dysentery, attended with fever. We meet here with another of the fantastic objections which have been brought against the identification of Melita. It has been contended that dysentery is never found in Malta. It might be enough to reply that changes in the natural condition of a country involve changes in regard to human health; but it happens that the writer of the present note has been by the bedside of a friend suffering from dysentery in Malta. The use of the plural *επιπλοῖς* is an instance of the accuracy of St. Luke's professional language. The fever fits of Publius were intermittent. It may be added that *κατὰ νύκτα* is the word which would naturally be used of a patient in such a condition (see Luke v. 25).

**Entered in, and prayed.** He followed the same course as St. Peter in the case of Tabitha (Acts ix. 40). The miraculous power was granted to the apostles on occasion; and here we see it exercised in conjunction with prayer, in virtue of that faith which 'removes mountains.'

**Laid hands on him and healed him.** This is a second specimen of the fulfilment of part of the promise given in Mark xvi. 18.

**Ver. 9. Others also which had diseases.** More accurately, 'the rest (οἱ λοιποὶ) who had diseases.' It is probable that all the sick persons in the island who could be moved were brought to St. Paul. The population was scanty, the island was small, and the apostle remained there three months. The imperfect tense, too, of the verbs which follow, denotes something that went on continuously. This was a golden opportunity for making known the gospel to hearts predisposed to receive it. Nothing is said of this subject; but we cannot suppose either that St. Paul neglected his Master's cause, or that his spiritual work was without result.

**Ver. 10. Honoured us with many honours.** In 1 Tim. v. 3, 17, the word (*τιμή*) used here is employed to denote the material support of religious ministers; and whatever else may be included, we need not exclude that meaning here. St. Paul did not refuse elsewhere to accept the gifts which were freely offered to him. Chrysostom says here: 'Did he receive pay? God forbid! No; but there was a fulfilment of that which is written, The labourer is worthy of his support,' quoting the very passage which St. Paul quotes in writing to Timothy.

**When we departed, they laden us with such things as were necessary.** When they were preparing to set sail, gifts for the wants of the voyage

were lavishly pressed upon them. We must remember that on the previous voyage they had suffered many hardships and losses.

*Voyage from Malta to Puteoli, 11-14.*

**Ver. 11. After three months.** Probably it was now February. The earliest opportunity which the weather permitted would be taken. This is one of the indications of time which are to be taken into account in estimating the relative chronology of St. Paul's life.

**A ship of Alexandria, which had wintered in the iale.** The same circumstances of weather which had caused so much disaster to the other ship, had kept this ship in the harbour of Valetta. This too, like the other, was doubtless a corn ship.

**Whose sign was Castor and Pollux.** A reference may be allowed at this point to the articles 'Ship,' 'Castor and Pollux,' and 'Rhegium,' in the *Dictionary of the Bible*. The 'great twin brethren,' Castor and Pollux (the 'Dioscuri,' as

the name is given here in the Greek), were the tutelary gods of Greek sailors (Horace, *Od.* i. 3, 2, and 12, 28), and their presence was often imagined in the phosphorescent light—the fires of St. Elmo—playing on the masts of Mediterranean ships. Their figures were doubtless painted in the customary conventional form, with stars above their heads, on each side of the bow of the ship. St. Luke's notice of the fact is valuable as an indication of the presence of an eye-witness. The thought, too, of an Egyptian ship, with heathen symbols, bearing the gospel to Italy, is suggestive of many interesting reflections. See some reflections of this kind in Bishop Wordsworth's *Commentary*.

**Ver. 12. Landing at Syracuse.** Or rather, 'putting into harbour at Syracuse.' This was in their direct course. The distance is about eighty miles to the north of Malta.

**Three days.** From what follows, it seems probable that they were waiting for a fair wind.

**Ver. 13. From thence we fetched a compass.**



Puteoli.

The meaning of this English phrase is (as in 2 Kings iii. 9), that they did not sail in a straight course; and from the mention of a fair wind presently afterwards which enabled them to do so, it is natural to conclude that they were forced to tack or beat against an unfavourable wind.

**Came to Rhegium.** This is a town on the Italian side of the Straits, nearly opposite to Messina on the Sicilian side. See the Excursus on the Apocryphal Acts. It is a curious coincidence that the ancient coins of Rhegium exhibit Castor and Pollux as twin brothers, with stars above their heads (see note on ver. 11).

**After one day the south wind blew.** This was the most favourable wind for carrying the vessel through the Faro; and if she was rigged with a great square sail, she would go very rapidly before it.

**We came the next day to Puteoli.** The distance is about 122 miles; and if the ship sailed about seven knots, she would have accomplished the voyage in twenty-six hours. Puteoli (the

modern Pozzuoli) was, next after Ostia, the most important harbour of Western Italy; and especially it was the customary port for the Alexandrian corn ships. A very animated account of the arrival of these corn ships is given in a contemporary document, one of Seneca's letters. Puteoli, it is to be observed, was close to the north-western point of the bay of Naples; and Seneca tells us that trading vessels, on coming into sight round the island of Capri, were required to strike their topsails, with the exception of these Alexandrian corn ships, which were thus easily recognised. Then the philosopher describes how the people crowded down to the pier, to welcome their arrival. Thus we have some help for imagining the scene correctly, when St. Paul first set foot on Italian ground. But a further help is supplied to us by visible and tangible remains. Seventeen piers still survive of the mole upon which his foot was set. In fact, the most perfect ruin existing of any ancient Roman harbour is that which is for ever connected with the memory of St. Paul's arrival in Italy.



Ver. 14. **Where we found brethren.** We know from Rom. xvi., and indeed from the mere existence of the Epistle to the Romans, that the Christian 'brethren' were at this time numerous in the metropolis. Hence there must have been Christians at Puteoli, which was the place of communication by sea with Palestine. We must also remember that, since Puteoli was a mercantile harbour with very active business, the Jews were probably numerous there, with a synagogue or more than one.

**Were desired to tarry with them seven days.** We seem here to have a clear indication of the observance of the Lord's day, as in xx. 6, 7 at Troas, and in xxi. 4 at Tyre. As to the permission given by Julius to spend a week at Puteoli, this need cause us no difficulty. He might himself be waiting for orders; it is probable that he had time at his command; and now, at the close of the voyage, after owing his life to St. Paul, it is not likely that he would be less considerate and kind than at the beginning (see xxvii. 3).

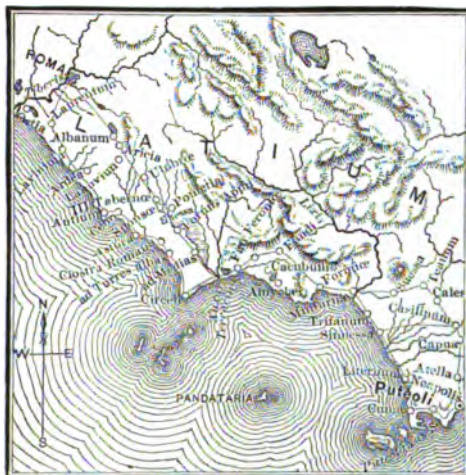
**And so we went toward Rome.** More correctly,

'and so we came to Rome.' From this bare statement of the fact of their arrival at the end of their journey, St. Luke turns aside in the next sentence to mention most interesting circumstances connected with their route from Puteoli. This route was first by a road called the 'Consular Way,' which led to Capua, and then along the celebrated 'Appian Way' to Rome. The stages are given in the *Itineraries* (see Wesseling). For the features of the country through which they travelled, see *Life and Epistles of St. Paul*.

*Journey from Puteoli and Arrival in Rome, 15.*

Ver. 15. **When the brethren heard of us.** During the week spent at Puteoli there would be abundant time for the intelligence to travel to Rome; nor would a moment be lost in announcing the arrival of the wonderful writer of the Epistle to the Romans.

**They came to meet us as far as Appii Forum and the Three Taverns.** They were in two separate groups, the one in advance of the other.



Map of Puteoli to Rome.

Among them were possibly Aquila and Priscilla, and others named in the sixteenth chapter of the epistle. The two places are well known to us through the writings of Horace and Cicero, and through the *Itineraries*. Three Taverns was thirty-three miles from Rome, and Appii Forum ten miles farther, on the low ground termed 'the Pomptine Marshes.'

**Whom when Paul saw, he thanked God and took courage.** We mark here two most distinctive characteristics of St. Paul—the consciousness of help derived from the presence of his friends, and the gratitude which such services inspired in him. See, for instance, 2 Cor. ii. 13, vii. 6; and 2 Tim. i. 16–18.

*Paul at Rome—His work in the Capital, 16–31.*

Ver. 16. **Delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard.** This officer (συνταγματάρχης, *prefect of the praetorian guard*) is named in the singular; and this circumstance has been used by Wieseler and others, in conjunction with additional evidence, to prove that St. Paul came to

Rome in the early part of 62 A.D. At that time Burrhus was sole commander of the praetorian guard (see Norris, *Key to the Acts*, p. 155). This argument, however, must not be pressed too confidently; for the language used by St. Luke need only imply a reference to the officer in command at the time.

**But Paul was suffered to dwell by himself.** In the case of state prisoners sent to Rome from the provinces for trial, it was usual to confine them in a prison adjoining the Prætorian Camp, which was north-east of the city, outside the Porta Viminalis; but sometimes the prisoners were suffered to choose their own residence, under the custody of a soldier. This indulgence was granted to Paul by Burrhus, then Prætorian Præfect, the friend and colleague of Seneca, probably owing to the kindly report sent from Cæsarea by Festus and King Agrippa. Already we have read of the centurion Julius, who brought Paul from the East to Rome, courteously entreating his prisoner (chap. xxvii. 3). It seems as though the Roman officials pitied the brave

missionary apostle, although they were unable to resist the strong pressure put on them by the influential Jews of Jerusalem to bring him to trial for his alleged seditious preaching. 'Tradition points to the vestibule of the Church of Santa Maria, at the junction of the Via Lata and the Corso, as the site of his dwelling; but it has been urged by Dr. Philip, at present working as a missionary in the Ghetto at Rome, in a pamphlet *On the Ghetto* (Rome, 1874), that this site, forming part of the old Flaminian Way, was then occupied by arches and public buildings, and that it was far more probable that he would fix his quarters near those of his own countrymen. He adds that a local tradition points to No. 2 in the Via Stringhari, just outside the modern Ghetto, as having been St. Paul's dwelling-place' (Plumptre).

**With a soldier that kept him.** To this gaoler Paul was fastened by a chain, to which the apostle

refers in ver. 20, and again in his epistles, written during this imprisonment, to foreign churches (see Eph. vi. 20; Phil. i. 7, 13, 16; Col. iv. 18).

The soldier thus chained to him was relieved at stated intervals, and so by means of these stern military guardians—each of whom doubtless in turn was won by the sweet patience and glowing earnestness of the captive—Paul's bonds in Christ were manifested in the Prætorian Camp, and in all other places (see Phil. i. 13).

**Ver. 17. And it came to pass, that after three days Paul called the chief of the Jews together.** The Book of the 'Acts' tells us of the loving, restless activity of Paul to the last. Before the prisoner's arrival at the imperial city, some of the Christians of Rome had met him at Appii Forum and the Three Taverns (ver. 15). With these brethren in the faith, and with others who no doubt at once sought out and visited the famous



Appian Way.

Christian missionary in his prison lodging, Paul spent his three first days in Rome. On the fourth day he invited the leading Jews of the Hebrew colony to visit him. The Jewish colony in Rome was a large one; they dwelt in one quarter of the city, the 'Trastevere,' or district beyond the river. When a petition was sent from Jerusalem to the Roman Emperor against Archelaus, son of Herod the Great, Josephus tells us 8000 Jews resident in Rome supported it. This Jewish community 'had its first beginning in the captives brought by Pompey after his eastern campaign. Many of them were manumitted; and thus a great proportion of the Jews in Rome were freedmen. Frequent accessions to their numbers were made as years went on, chiefly owing to the mercantile relations which subsisted between Rome and the East. Many of them were wealthy, and large sums were sent annually for religious purposes from Italy to the mother country' (Howson, *St. Paul*). These Jews had been banished from the imperial city by

a decree of Claudius, A.D. 49; but this decree, some time before Paul's arrival as a prisoner at Rome, had been rescinded or allowed to lapse. Probably this favour had been procured through the influence of Poppæa, at this time all-powerful with the Emperor Nero. Poppæa was a proselyte to Judaism. The chiefs of the Jews here alluded to included the rulers and elders of the synagogues and heads of the principal Jewish families settled in Rome, with the scribes and probably the wealthier traders.

**Men and brethren, though I have committed nothing against the people or customs of our fathers, yet was I delivered prisoner from Jerusalem into the hands of the Romans.** Here in Rome, as in all the great centres where he had preached during the last twenty years, Paul begins his work among his own loved race. Here, as had been his unvarying custom, he seeks to win his listeners by the most studied courtesy, and addresses these haughty Jews by the name they

so persistently, even in exile and humiliation, arrogated to themselves, *the people*, dwelling with reverence on the memory of the customs of *our fathers*. 'Unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law' (1 Cor. ix. 20). Paul's loving life-work had been in truth the glorification of Judaism—of *true* Judaism. He had taught that his Master's religion was nothing but the development of the religion of Moses, only world-wide instead of being confined to one race. Much of the bitter enmity he had evoked sprang from the utter inability of his selfish, narrow-minded countrymen to disprove his references to the words of the great Hebrew prophets, foretelling the development of the old Hebrew faith into a world-wide religion.

Ver. 18. *Who, when they had examined me, would have let me go, because there was no cause of death in me.* All the great Roman officials, before whose tribunals, at different periods of his career, Paul had been brought, through the enmity of his countrymen, had acquitted him of sedition and wrong-doing. He was thinking of Sergius Paulus (chap. xiii. 7), Gallio (chap. xviii. 12), Claudius Lysias (chap. xxiii. 29), Felix (chap. xxiv. 25), Festus and Agrippa (chap. xxvi. 32), but especially of the last two names, the Roman governor and the Jewish king, who so unwillingly had sent him to Rome to be judged before the imperial tribunal.

Ver. 19. *But when the Jews spake against it, I was constrained to appeal unto Cæsar; not that I had ought to accuse my own nation of.* He presses this point upon them, being most anxious to show them he was there not as an accuser of, or an enemy to, 'the people'—the people whom he loved better than life. It was to do them no harm that he had appealed to the Cæsar at Rome: it was his last resort to save himself from judicial murder or assassination. We must bear in mind that here, as in the other reports of Paul's sermons and speeches, we only possess the barest outline of the original. No doubt he sketched out to his listeners that day at Rome a full picture of all the dark plottings on the part of his countrymen which had preceded his 'appeal unto Cæsar.'

Ver. 20. *For this cause therefore have I called for you, to see you, and to speak with you.* His love to his own people was so great that the ever-recurring suspicions of his work and conduct on the part of the Jews were the occasion of the most bitter grief to him. He longed to set himself right with the representatives of the nation dwelling in Rome, and with this hope he had sent for them to his prison room.

*Because that for the hope of Israel I am bound with this chain.* The 'Hope,' the glorious hope, for which he, the old man, was suffering all these indignities, was closely connected with the Messiah, for whom Israel had been so long anxiously waiting. He, Paul, believed that that Messiah *had* come in the person of Jesus of Nazareth. It was his unswerving belief in that Messiah Jesus which was the cause of all his suffering, including the chain then hanging upon his arm and linking him to the silent Roman legionary at his side. The chain is specially mentioned in the singular. This is evidently the remark of an eye-witness, who was referring to the fetter which bound him to a single soldier (see ver. 16).

Ver. 21. *And they said unto him, We neither*

*received letters out of Judæa concerning thee, neither any of the brethren that came showed or spake any harm of thee.* This reply of the Roman Jews was more courteous than honest. It was probably the fact that no *official* communication from the Sanhedrim had as yet been received by the Roman synagogue; for during the two years of the Cæsarean imprisonment there was no need for the council in Jerusalem to write to their fellow-countrymen at Rome respecting the prisoner Paul, and after his appeal to the emperor there had been no time to send information to Rome concerning him. Paul would have arrived at the metropolis before any *official* tidings from Jerusalem could have reached the Roman Jews. We know he left Cæsarea soon after his appeal; and shortly after his departure, the sea—owing to the time of year—was closed for navigation. But it was clearly disingenuous for them on their part to deny any knowledge of his evil fame among the rulers of the people. The principal charge brought against a prominent leader of the Christians like Paul must have been well known to the Roman Jews. They must in past years have often heard of the hated Paul of Tarsus, now a leading Nazarene, once known as the brilliant and admired Pharisee Saul.

The result of the earnest and impassioned pleading of the Christian apostle, told so shortly, but so sorrowfully, in the words of ver. 24, 'and some believed not,' coupled with the evident mournful disappointment manifested by Paul at his complete failure to convince 'some'—evidently a large number—of his Jewish audience, points to the conclusion we have arrived at, that the courteous reply of the Roman Jews to Paul (ver. 21) was hollow and false.

Ver. 22. *But we desire to hear of thee what thou thinkest: for as concerning this sect, we know that everywhere it is spoken against.* The leading Jews of Rome who accepted the prisoner Paul's invitation to visit him in his confinement, were naturally anxious to hear what such an one, notoriously a leader of the strange sect, and just arrived from the Holy Land under such peculiar circumstances, would have to say on behalf of the faith for which he had endured and suffered so much. They knew, doubtless, at least the outlines of the famous missionary teacher's story; in spite of their alleged ignorance, his antecedents were of course well known to the majority of them. But it would be interesting to hear the Christian story from the lips of a highly-cultured Pharisee like Paul; so they express their desire to hear what he has to say concerning a sect which they carefully assure him was everywhere spoken against. Already men had begun to whisper abroad the dark calumnies which we know were universally circulated through the Roman world concerning the innocent Christians. The jealous and angry Jew joined hands here with the Pagan in fostering untrue and utterly baseless rumours respecting the worship and practice of men whose doctrines were gradually penetrating into all classes and orders of the Empire. For instance, the Roman historian Tacitus, who wrote in the days of the Emperor Nero, speaks of the Christian religion as 'a detestable superstition' (*exitialis superstitio*), and calls attention to 'the atrocious and shameful crimes condemned by the hatred of mankind.' Suetonius, writing in the same reign, describes



the followers of Jesus of Nazareth as 'a race of men holding a novel and criminal superstition.'

Ver. 23. **And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into his lodging.** The word in the original translated 'many' is a comparative form, and implies either that more of the Roman Jews came to hear Paul than on the first occasion, or else that more of these leading Jews presented themselves in the house used as Paul's prison than had been expected by the apostle and his companions.

To whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses and out of the prophets, from morning till evening. Even the short *resumé* of the discourse which the compiler of the 'Acts' has given on several momentous occasions in the history is wanting here. All seems to point to the fact that the majority of the listeners remained unconvinced. The long and earnest pleading of Paul with his countrymen dwelling in the queen city, availed nothing. Only a very few seemed to have listened; as for the rest, their hearts were hopelessly hardened. What an end for the aged and worn apostle, who had so earnestly desired to visit Rome! There is something terribly dramatic in the words of the Isaiah blessing and the Isaiah curse which the sorrowful servant of Jesus Christ pronounced, as the Hebrew rejecters of the glorious message of his Divine Master departed from his prison chamber that same evening, resolved to see his face no more.

From that hour it is probable that Paul for the remainder of his life gave up the hope of touching the heart of Israel as a people, and devoted the few remaining years of his noble life to winning to his loving Master's side the hated and despised Gentile nations—the peoples who had so long sat in darkness and in the shadow of death. The splendid results of his labours are revealed in the story of the eighteen Christian centuries. The aged Christian teacher looked down the long vista of these many years, when he declared with true prophetic instinct, *As for the rejected salvation of God, they (the Gentiles) would hear it.*

Ver. 24. **And some believed the things that were spoken, and some believed not.** The number of those who rejected the salvation of the Messiah evidently far exceeded the number of those who were convinced by Paul's pleading. The melancholy and indignant tone of the apostle's words, with which he closed the memorable day of argument and exhortation, only too plainly tell us of a loving patience at last exhausted. They are the words of one giving up a hopeless struggle.

Ver. 25. **And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed.** Evidently the assembled Jews openly expressed their difference of opinion. A remnant seems to have believed, but the large majority clearly expressed themselves with extreme bitterness, and with hearts full of envy and hatred. The thought of a suffering Messiah was hateful to these proud, ambitious men. The idea of sharing a salvation with the loathed and accursed Gentiles they refuse for an instant to entertain.

After that Paul had spoken one word, **Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers.** 'One final significant word, as opposed to many words' (Hackett). The prophecy here quoted is from Isa. vi. 9, 10, and

agrees almost exactly with the words of the Septuagint Version. No passage is quoted so often in the New Testament as this. It occurs six times in the Gospels, in the Epistle to the Romans, and here in the Acts. St. Paul's use of the awful words of Isaiah on this momentous occasion, and also in the argument in the Roman Epistle, shows that our Lord's discourse and His deductions from Hebrew prophecy were well known to, and had been often pondered over by, the missionary apostle and his friends.

Ver. 26. **Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive.** The stern prediction originally occurs in a sublime passage (Isa. vi.), which relates how, under circumstances of extraordinary solemnity, the Divine commission to be a prophet of the Lord to Israel was entrusted to Isaiah. Then he is told that he must preach to the chosen people, who, however, will refuse to listen to him. He hears that his divinely-inspired words will, far from converting, only blind their eyes and harden their hearts, and in the end the doom of judicial blindness will be their punishment. The terrible prediction was first fulfilled to the letter in the prophet's own days. After his time, calamity following on calamity, years of ruin and captivity, all failed to touch the hearts of the stubborn and rebellious people. It therefore received another and final fulfilment in the impenitence of the people, and in their determined rejection of the love and mercy of their Messiah.

The story of the eighteen Christian centuries, which relates the strange destiny of the Jews since the last fall of Jerusalem and its temple, tells the nations of the world how the prophecy of the Holy Ghost has been carried out.

Ver. 29. **And when he had said these words, the Jews departed, and had great reasoning among themselves.** The whole of this verse is wanting in the more ancient MSS. and versions, and must be considered spurious. It was, however, probably added in early times by some scribe, to soften down the apparent abruptness of the close of the account of the interview between Paul and the leading Jews of Rome.

Ver. 30. **And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him.** We must remember that all this time the apostle was a close prisoner of state, although, through the indulgence of the prætorian præfect, allowed to reside in a lodging of his own instead of in the prison within the walls of the prætorian barracks. The expenses incurred were no doubt defrayed by faithful friends at Rome and in the provinces (see, for instance, the reference in Phil. iv. 10-14, one of the epistles written during this imprisonment at Rome). Paul during this period of captivity was, during the day, chained to a soldier, and probably in the night two soldiers watched him, according to the sentence of the Roman law, *nox custodiam geminal*. We possess four of his writings composed while in prison at Rome—the Epistles to the Ephesians, Colossians, and Philippians, and the short letter to Philemon. From notices in these writings, we learn that Luke, Timothy, Epaphras, Mark, Aristarchus, and Tychicus were among the friends who, during a whole or part of this time, were with the apostle.

Ver. 31. **No man forbidding him.** Literally,

'without hindrance' (*ἀκωλύτως*). Wordsworth remarks 'that there is something musical in the cadence of this word reserved for the end of the Book. It commences with a short syllable followed by three long ones, happily adapted to express rest after labour (see Catullus, *Carm.* xxix. 6-10). Compare the word *ἵκαμην*, *he fell asleep*—a word of like quantity closing the history of St. Stephen's martyrdom' (Acts vii. 60). Thus far the imperial authorities were disposed to show all toleration to the disciples of the new faith. They probably looked upon the 'Christians' as a sect of Jews harmless in themselves, and even useful in occupying the attention of their more turbulent and fervid co-religionists. The Roman authorities no doubt at this time viewed the intense hatred which existed between the more rigid Jews and the rapidly-increasing Christians with considerable favour; in addition to which, statesmen of the type of Burrhus, the prætorian præfect, and Seneca, at that time the friend of the Emperor Nero, would ever be ready to encourage and protect a sect like the Christians, which taught its disciples an unswerving loyalty to the existing government, which discouraged all meddling with politics and directed attention only to philanthropic interests. Its peculiar worship, its especial hopes and fears, were matters with which these philosophic Pagan statesmen declined to interfere.

It was only in the later years of Nero, when other influences were at work, and the infamous and cruel Tigellinus was dominant in the state, that the Christians were marked out by a mistaken and foolish policy for persecution. (For the subsequent history of Paul, see Excursus C, following this chapter.)

#### EXCURSUS A.

##### ON THE APOCRYPHAL ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

It seems proper, before this commentary closes, that some slight notice should be taken of a literature which is in one sense parallel with the Acts of the Apostles. Just as Apocryphal Gospels exist, if not in rivalry with, yet in contrast with, the Canonical Gospels, so are there Apocryphal Acts which at least invite comparison with the Authentic Acts. Literature of this kind filled a large space in the second and third centuries; and the surviving fragments of it have been brought to view in the course of modern criticism and speculation far more prominently than used to be the case. It will be only necessary here to mention three of the most important of these documents. A few words will show by how wide a gulf they are separated in character from the true record of St. Peter and St. Paul.

The scene of *The Acts of Paul and Thecla* is laid chiefly at Iconium. Names of places and persons suggested by the New Testament, such as Antioch and Myra on the one hand, and Onesiphorus and Demas on the other, seem to be put together in this document very much at random. But especially must be noted its utter want of dignity, as constituting a strong contrast with St. Luke's elevating narrative. Two of the chief features of this apocryphal work are a fantastic love story, and a form of asceticism quite different from what is inculcated in the New Testament. See some notice of this subject in the *Life and Epistles of St. Paul*, vol. i. chap. vi.

A much larger space is filled by what are known as the *Clementines*. We are acquainted with them in two forms—the *Homilies*, of which the Greek text is extant; and the *Recognitions*, of which we possess only a Latin translation. The general drift of this Ebionite production is to glorify St. Peter at the expense of St. Paul. It may suffice to quote on this subject some of the remarks of Baron de Bunsen, who was by no means narrow and restricted in his orthodoxy. He says that the Ebionites 'have produced neither a genuine author nor a genuine work; they begin with Jewish separation and end with fiction.' They set up a *Prædicatio Petri*, 'which was afterwards extended into a regular novel and a very ingenious one.' Clement of Rome is 'made the hero of the story, as being a supposed disciple of Peter, whom he meets during that apostle's travels, being himself in search after truth. Of course both Clement and Peter are transformed into purely fictitious personages.' Bunsen adds that 'it is difficult to fix the origin and centre of a lie, and impossible to discover the history of a progressive fraud and fiction,' and he protests against Baur's modern 'attempt to subvert history by means of a novel—the canonical writings by the Clementine fictions.' One part of Baur's theory is, that the Pauline influence having been overpowered by the Petrine, attempts were made to rectify this result; and that the Acts of the Apostles, as we possess them, represent part of this endeavour, 'both parties forging and adulterating as many documents as they could' (*Christianity and Mankind*, vol. i. pp. 127-132). On the supposed antagonism between St. Peter and St. Paul, as exhibited in the *Clementines*, see Bishop Lightfoot on the *Galatians*.

A third apocryphal document, which possesses greater dignity, and some parts of which are really edifying and beautiful, is entitled the *Acts of Peter and Paul*. In it is contained the beautiful legend of Peter when he was fleeing from martyrdom: 'My Lord Jesus Christ met me as I was going; and having adored Him, I said, Lord, whither art Thou going? And He said to me, I am going to Rome to be crucified.' That this document, however, is, so to speak, a random composition, is evident from its geographical inaccuracy. It begins by speaking of the voyage of St. Paul from Malta to Puteoli, with 'Dioscurus' as the ship-master (see Acts xviii. 11). It is distinctly said in ver. 13 that the ship stayed only one day at Rhegium; and this fact is expressly connected with a change of wind, which admitted of no delay: and it is added that they arrived at Puteoli 'the next day;' whereas in these Apocryphal Acts, it is stated that Paul went across from Rhegium to Messina, and there ordained a bishop. We see here most distinctly the traces of a later period. On the other hand, we have in this document the most express recognition of the unity of Peter and Paul in their spirit and their teaching. The Christians in Rome are represented as writing to St. Paul, on hearing of his approach, 'We have believed, and do believe, that as God does not separate the two great lights which He has made, so He is not to part you from each other, that is, neither Peter from Paul, nor Paul from Peter;' and again, when Paul stands before Nero, we find him asserting: 'Those things which thou hast heard from Peter, believe to have been spoken by me also: for we purpose the same thing, we have the same Lord Jesus Christ.'

Thus we find that another of the Apocryphal Acts of the second century may be fairly set against the Clementines, in refutation of the theory of deliberate and continued antagonism between St. Peter and St. Paul.

All these documents are now accessible to the English reader in the *Ante-Nicene Christian Library*. And the more fully they are read the better; for in their tone and character they are as different as possible from the Authentic Acts. We have no reason, for instance, to regret that Renan has taken great pains to bring all literature of this class fully to view. The more carefully it is placed all around the Scriptural narrative, and compared with it, the more does that narrative tower above it all, like a mountain above lower hazy heights with a golden light ever upon its summit.

#### EXCURSUS B.

##### ON THE INTRODUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY INTO ROME.

In the first century of the Christian era, the principal Jewish quarter at Rome was situated in the low-lying district beyond the river, between the Tiber and the Janiculum Hill, always known as 'Transtiberina'; the 'Trastevere,' probably in the immediate neighbourhood of the Porta Portuensis, close to which was once the principal Jewish cemetery. This district was the port of Rome, and to this spot on the Tiber the merchandise brought from distant countries and the East to Ostia was conveyed, and here landed. It was peculiarly the quarter of Syrians and Jews.

The Jewish community at Rome owed its origin, as we stated above (see note on ver. 17), to the captives brought by Pompey to Rome.

The original colony was largely recruited as time went on, and Rome, like other great cities, became the home of vast numbers of the 'chosen people.' Some of these we know, from the contributions sent over for religious purposes to the Holy Land, were wealthy; but by far the larger proportion of the Roman Jews was extremely poor, carrying on the various little trades common in the humbler and crowded quarters of large cities. It is more than probable that the religion of Jesus was first introduced into this poor though numerous colony on the banks of the Tiber, by pilgrims returning after the memorable Pentecost which followed the Ascension of the Messiah.

In the long list of salutations at the end of the Epistle to the Romans, Paul salutes Andronicus and Junia, his kinsmen . . . 'who were in Christ,' he writes, 'before me' (Rom. xvi. 7). Now Paul's conversion took place in the year 37—not more, it is supposed, than four years after the Ascension. These prominent members of the Roman Church had therefore received the faith of Christ some time between A.D. 33 and A.D. 37, and we have no reason to suppose that they were not among the Jewish sojourners at Rome at the time of their conversion. Two other names of the primitive Church of Rome are also certainly known to us, Aquila, a tentmaker by trade, of Pontus, and Priscilla his wife. These, about the year 50–51, were, with their fellow-countrymen, expelled from Rome, and made a temporary home for themselves at Corinth. Paul, on his arrival at that city A.D. 52, took up his abode with this pious couple. Nothing is said about *his* converting them to his Master's faith. We may

assume, with some certainty, that he selected their house as his home on account of their being Christians already. [This is, at least, the opinion of Neander, Wieseler, Olshausen, Lange, Ewald, and others; see note on chap. xviii. 2.] Now, it is expressly stated (Acts xviii. 2) that this Aquila and his wife had left Italy 'because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome.' Suetonius, the well-known Roman historian, fills in the wanted details here, and tells us (*Claud.* 25) that the Emperor Claudius drove the Jews from Rome because they were incessantly raising tumults at the instigation of a certain Chrestus. This was in the year 51–52 (according to some, A.D. 49–50).

What had happened to Rome is clear. Between A.D. 33 and A.D. 51, the little Christian sect in the poor Trastevere river quarter had been gradually increasing; its members recruited partly from Jewish families, partly from Syrians or Italians, living and working by their side.

As the Christian Church grew in numbers and in consideration, the same jealousies and heart-burnings were stirred up among the rigid and exclusive Jews in Rome as in Jerusalem, or Corinth, or Ephesus. The same spirit which years later prompted the stubborn representatives of the 'people' to turn a deaf ear to the pleading voice of Paul the prisoner, flamed out in hot anger against their renegade brothers, who could countenance and approve a teaching which gave, as it seemed, to these proud mistaken ones a death-blow to their claims of Israelitic supremacy; and as in Corinth and at Philippi, so too in the crowded and squalid Trastevere of Rome, these furious and misguided Jews would now and again, in their jealous fury, have recourse to violence. It was owing, no doubt, to these recurring tumults and disorders, that the edict of Claudius was issued ordering all Jews (the Roman government could see no difference between the Christian and the Jew) to leave the capital.

The edict of banishment, however, was soon after repealed, or suffered to lapse, for we hear of Aquila and Priscilla returning, after a comparatively short absence, to Rome again.

It has been ingeniously suggested that some of the oldest memories connected with Christianity at Rome, belong to a humble tavern on the Tiber quay of that poor rough 'Trastevere' quarter, known as the Taberna Meritoria. This inn, frequented by the poor struggling Jews of the neighbourhood, boasted, as its chief attraction, a little oil spring flowing out of the rock. From a very early date, the Roman Christians related that this strange spring gushed forth at the same time that Jesus Christ was born in Bethlehem. Later, the tavern became a church; and tradition claims that Santa Maria of the Trastevere occupies the site of this ancient inn, in an upper room of which perhaps the earliest meetings of the Roman believers in Jesus were held (comp. Renan, *St. Paul*, chap. iv.).

#### EXCURSUS C.

##### THE LAST YEARS OF ST. PAUL.

The story of the 'Acts' comes to an end with the close of the two years' imprisonment at Rome, A.D. 63. The unanimous testimony of the primitive Church tells us that the appeal of St. Paul to Cæsar (Acts xxv. 11), after a long delay, termi-

nated successfully for the prisoner. The delay was quite in accordance with the ordinary course of Roman law, which allowed ample time for the bringing together of witnesses and evidence from a distance. In the case of St. Paul these witnesses had to be summoned and evidence got together from very distant provinces of the Empire.

The apostle appears to have been liberated A.D. 63, and for some years more laboured earnestly in his Master's cause in various lands. In the year 66 he was again arrested by the Roman government, conveyed to Rome, and there condemned and executed A.D. 67-68.

The principal evidences for this are found in the Epistle of Clement, Bishop of Rome, the disciple of St. Paul (Phil. iv. 3), to the Romans, written in the last year of the first century. 'He, Paul, had gone to the *extremity of the West* before his martyrdom.' In a Roman writer the 'extremity of the West' could only signify 'Spain,' and we know in that portion of his life related in the Acts he had never journeyed farther west than Italy. In the fragments of the Canon called Muratori's, written about A.D. 170, we read in the account of the Acts of the Apostles: 'Luke relates to Theophilus events of which he was an eye-witness; as also in a separate place (Luke xxii. 31-33<sup>1</sup>), he evidently declares the martyrdom of Peter, but (omits) the journey of St. Paul to Spain.' Eusebius (*H. E.* ii. 22, A.D. 320) writes: 'After defending himself successfully, it is currently reported that the apostle again went forth to proclaim the gospel, and afterwards came to Rome a second time, and was martyred under Nero.'

St. Chrysostom (A.D. 398) mentions as an undoubted historical fact, 'that St. Paul, after his residence in Rome, departed to Spain.' St. Jerome (A.D. 390) also relates, 'that St. Paul was dismissed by Nero, that he might preach Christ's gospel in the West.' Thus in the Catholic Church in the East and West, during the three hundred years which succeeded the death of St. Paul, a unanimous tradition was current that the great apostle's labours were continued for a period extending over three years after his liberation from that Roman imprisonment related in Acts xxviii.

In addition to the above quoted most weighty testimony to a period of activity in St. Paul's life

<sup>1</sup> Routh, *Reliquiæ Sacre*, vol. i. p. 395, suggests here that the reference is to St. John xxi. 18, 19, and reads, for 'he evidently declares,' 'they evidently declare.' The text of the Muratorian Fragment on the Canon is confused, and is full of barbarisms and gross inaccuracies. See Westcott on the Canon, chap. xi., 'The Age of the Greek Apologists.'

subsequent to the captivity at Rome related in the last chapter of the Acts, we possess three epistles bearing the name of the Apostle of the Gentiles. Of these three epistles, two were addressed to Timothy and one to Titus. The early Church, without question, from the first century downwards, included these writings among the undoubted works of St. Paul.

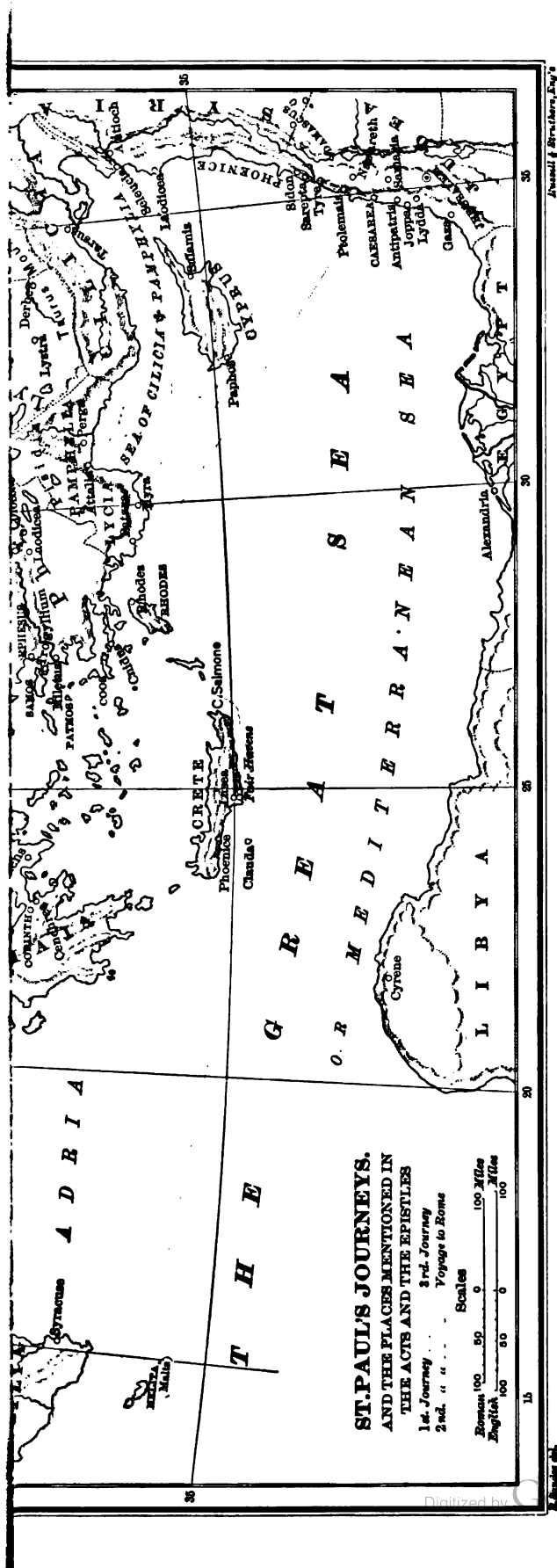
Now it is impossible to assign any period in the lifetime of St. Paul, as related in the 'Acts,' which would suit the peculiar circumstances under which it is evident these writings were composed. The historical references to persons, and the traces they present of development both of truth and error in the churches referred to, point to a somewhat later period. All the necessary conditions are, however, fulfilled if we accept the universally current tradition of the three years of work succeeding the captivity related in the Acts.

Following then the accounts of Clement, of the unknown writer of the Muratorian Fragment on the Canon, of Eusebius, Chrysostom, and Jerome, we conclude that Paul was liberated in the year 63, and then, leaving Rome, he went to Spain and the great African province adjacent. We possess no traditions of his work in the far West, only the language used by Tertullian at the close of the second century respecting the amazing success which the gospel preaching had met with in the great and populous province of Proconsular Africa supplies us with a hint—for it is no more—that here in the flourishing and numerous churches of North Africa (so close to the Spain of the tradition) must be sought the chief results of the closing labours of Paul's great life.

From the far West, somewhere about the years 65-67, he returned and visited once more the Greek and Asiatic churches founded by him and his disciples in earlier days. Towards the close of these last visits, possibly from Macedonia, Paul wrote the First Epistle to Timothy, then in charge of the Church of Ephesus. The Epistle to Titus was indited soon after. It was in Nicopolis, the city of that name in Epirus, that the apostle was again arrested, once more brought to Rome as a state prisoner. While waiting his final trial, he wrote the second letter to his dear disciple Timothy. As we read the well-known concluding words of the sad yet rejoicing farewell, we are sensible that the writer *knew* that for him the end was very near. The *shadow* of death rests upon each of the touching, beautiful words; but for the writer the *bitterness* of death was past; his forebodings were too surely realized, and he entered into his eternal rest that same year, 67.



**Arch of Drusus.**





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